



Robert Wright:  
Decoding God's  
Changing Moods

Five Roadblocks  
To Health Care  
Reform



Should You Hold  
Stocks for the  
Long Haul?


# TIME





you know who could use a  
car like this? everyone.



the INSiGHT. a new hybrid from Honda. Honda and hybrid. AKA, reliability and efficiency, two things everyone can use. Other useful things: an innovative battery, split fold-down rear seats and 43 hwy mpg.\* The hybrid designed and priced for us all. The new Insight.  from Honda. for everyone.

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## 4 | 10 QUESTIONS

John Krasinski moves from *The Office* to the big screen

## 8 | INBOX

## 11 | POSTCARD: WICHITA



**John Krasinski** *What he reads, how he writes, page 4*

## BRIEFING

## 13 | THE MOMENT

The mystery of what happened to Air France Flight 447

**14 | THE WORLD** Britain's government turmoil; Israel's settlement stalemate

**16 | SPOTLIGHT** Who wins, who loses, what disappears forever as GM files for Chapter 11

**17 | HISTORY** What bankruptcy once meant

**18 | VERBATIM** Cheney defends gay marriage; Michael Moore on GM

**19 | POP CHART** Salinger sues; Boyle breaks down; Octomom gets a show

**20 | MILESTONES** George Tiller, abortion doctor, is killed at church

## COMMENTARY

**21 | TUNED IN** Jay Leno passes the torch to Conan O'Brien

**23 | IN THE ARENA** Joe Klein on the return of the culture wars

**Courtney Love** *Dispute over unpaid bills, page 19*



PAGE 4 13 21 24 32 53 61 68



**Twitterati** *Game changers Williams and Stone, page 32*



**Health hurdles** *The hard road to reform, page 24*

On the cover: Photo-Illustration for TIME by D.W. Pine. Insets, from left: Michelangelo Buonarroti/Bridgeman Art Library—Getty Images; Chris Hondros—Getty Images

## THE WELL

**24 | NATION: HEALTH CARE** The five big roadblocks to reform

**28 | WORLD: IRAN** Dennis Ross's high stakes bid to tame Tehran

## COVER STORY

**32 | SOCIETY: TWITTER** Easy Tweet: Once just a fast, Twitter is developing into a cultural force to be reckoned with. How it will change the way we live

**38 | TECHNOLOGY** How the Palm Pre hopes to outpace the iPhone

**42 | RELIGION** Robert Wright on what Scripture tells us about the chance for religious harmony

**47 | MONEY & MAIN STREET** Justin Fox on whether stocks still make sense for the long term

## LIFE

**53 | FOOD** Save money, cut out the middlemen: how friends and families are banding together to buy beef directly from farmers

**55 | FAMILY** Beijing's tight new restrictions trigger a sharp drop in Chinese adoptions by U.S. families

**56 | FIT NATION** A new study shows how e-mail reminders can help us eat better and exercise more often



## ARTS

**61 | MOVIES** *Land of the Lost* lets Will Ferrell enjoy his delusions of manhood, with dinosaurs looking on

**62 | MOVIES** *The Hangover* is a primitive bromance

**64 | TELEVISION** Falco shines as Nurse Jackie

**65 | MUSIC** The so-sweet sounds of Grizzly Bear

**67 | SHORT LIST** Woodstock rock doc; TV's *The Nine* returns; *The Art of Making Money*—counterfeit, that is

**Time travelers** Ferrell and friends, page 61

**68 | ESSAY** Nancy Gibbs on the meaning of the first Sesame Street President

# Starting Up

*The key to a successful startup isn't just the planning, it is also the doing.*

**Professors Tatiana Manolova and Linda Edelman**, Department of Management, Bentley University

Management professors Tatiana Manolova and Linda Edelman focus on the process of starting new ventures. What does it take to turn a brilliant startup idea into an actual business success? Below they discuss their research on "nascent entrepreneurs" and explain why it is a good time to start a business. In fact, they argue, America needs more of us to activate our entrepreneurial spirits right now.

**What are some of the common myths about entrepreneurs?** **TM:** That it is a straight shot between having the "big idea" and fame and fortune. In fact, there is a process in between. **LE:** It is not only about the business plan, it is also about taking action: opening a bank account, getting a phone, arranging childcare — these are the small steps we look at.

**Any secrets of success?** **TM:** It takes doing it. It takes tenacity. It takes knowing when to quit. **LE:** If you have been in the process of starting a business for 10 years, it's time to move on. Sometimes the most successful outcome is a gracious exit.

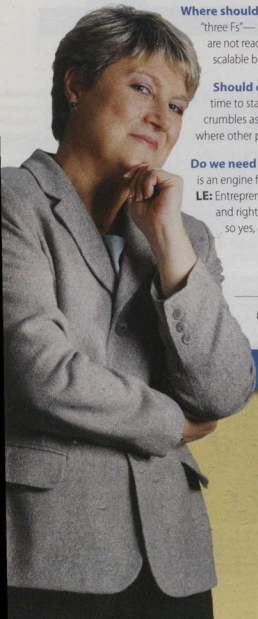
**Where should entrepreneurs look for money?** **LE:** At the very beginning, it is always the "three Fs" — friends, family and fools. Until you have a product with a track record in sales, you are not ready to approach the angel investor. **TM:** To attract venture capital, you need a scalable business, good intellectual property, and a solid organizational team.

**Should one start a business in this economy?** **TM:** This is a wonderful time to start a business. It's the principle of "creative destruction": the old order crumbles as new ideas emerge. **LE:** If you are someone who sees opportunities where other people see threats — now is the time to do it.

**Do we need more entrepreneurs?** **TM:** Absolutely. New business is an engine for growth. It creates jobs. It creates whole sectors of the economy.

**LE:** Entrepreneurship is our number-one source of competitive advantage and right now we are lagging behind China, India and Latin America — so yes, go start a business.

Hear **MORE** from Professors Manolova (L) and Edelman (R) at [Bentley.edu/research](http://Bentley.edu/research)



# Starting Young

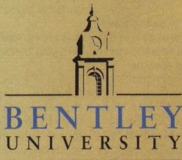
They have started human rights campaigns and international NGOs. They have organized homeless benefits and hurricane relief programs. They are engaged in cancer research, Mid-East peace initiatives and programs to aid children in China and Africa. All this before finishing high school. We invite you to join us in honoring these young leaders, selected through an international competition — the **Bentley Tomorrow25, Class of 2009.**

## Tomorrow<sup>25</sup>

**Seated (floor):** Charlene Lee (Walnut, CA); Rebecca Kantar (Newton, MA); Jonathan Liu (East Brunswick, NJ); Taylor Crosby (Houma, LA); Samita Mahanasundaram (Nashua, NH) **Seated (2nd row):** Burak Basogul (Istanbul, Turkey); Stephanie Damascus (Greenwich, CT); David Sanchez (Racine, WI); Arvin Ahmadi (Centreville, VA); Jessica Li (Carlisle, MA); Ayna Agarwal (Colonial, NJ) **Seated (3rd row):** Zachary Morrison (Sarasota, FL); Timothy Hwang (North Potomac, MD); Evaline Cheng (Sunnyvale, CA); Patrick Colangelo (Toronto, Canada); Justin Chung (Fort Lee, NJ) **Standing, left to right:** Vidur Khatri (Norwood, MA); Adejire Bademosi (Woodstock, MD); Constantine Kanellopoulos (Athens, Greece); Samuel Kornicks (Vero Beach, FL); Mateus Falci (Coral Springs, FL); Kelsey Petrie (Seekonk, MA); Ghassan Gammoh (Manja-Madaba, Jordan); Gerard Fischetti (Campbell Hall, NY); Gorick Ng (Toronto, Canada)



Learn **MORE** about the Tomorrow25 at [Bentley.edu/tomorrow25](http://Bentley.edu/tomorrow25)





# 10 Questions. *The Office's* resident nice guy gets serious in the new movie *Away We Go*. **John Krasinski will now take your questions**

**What prompted you to try acting?**

Joel Morales-Rolón  
SAN JUAN, P.R.

I wanted to be an English teacher. I wanted to do it for the corduroy jackets with patches on the side. When I got to college, as I was walking across campus one day, I ripped off a little flyer for this sketch-comedy group. It ended up being one of the greatest things I've ever done.

**How did you become reunited with your high school classmate B.J. Novak (also on *The Office*)?**

Anthony M. Belz  
PROVIDENCE, R.I.

Reunited—that sounds so romantic. We were doing our final auditions in L.A., and he was across the room. That was the first time I'd seen him since high school. It's one of those moments where your brain kind of caves in on itself. And then as soon as I asked him what part he was auditioning for and he didn't say my part, I was like, How are you?!

**How hard was it to write the screenplay for David Foster Wallace's *Brief Interviews with Hildeous Men*?**

Zach Watson  
COLUMBUS, OHIO

I think David Foster Wallace is one of the greatest writers that has ever lived. The majority of the movie is his words. I didn't change too much. I felt really nervous pretty much every day for about five years because I know how many people love his work.

**What other writers or novels do you admire?**

Jude Lovell, BETHLEHEM, PA.



I'm a huge classics fan. I love Ernest Hemingway and J.D. Salinger. I'm that guy who rereads a book before I read newer stuff, which is probably not all that progressive, and it's not really going to make me a better reader. I'm like, "Oh, my God, you should read *To Kill a Mockingbird*." And people are like, "I'm not 15." Still good, though.

**What drew you to *Away We Go*?**

Val Matchus, SCHAUMBURG, ILL. I got a call from Sam Mendes, who said, "I just read the script, and I'm only thinking of you for the part." I know everybody reading this is like, "The dude from *The Office* got a call from Sam Mendes?" I know. It's insane. The script is one of the best I've ever read.

**Do you plan on taking more dramatic roles, or do you prefer comedy?**

Jessica Feldman, MERRICK, N.Y. I love to do both. A good part's a good part. You can play serious and funny moments with a well-written role. *Away We Go* is a great example. I had so much fun [with] these weird, odd moments, but in the end, I play this guy who's really scared to have a baby.

**How are you least like Jim Halpert, your *The Office* character?**

Carla Good  
ROCKLAND, CALIF.

I think the thing about Jim is that he's very rarely willing to take chances. He's more comfortable being in a stable job where he's paid what he's paid and he does what he does, even

though I think that there's something bubbling beneath him that wants him to go somewhere else. I hope that I'm the type of guy who, when I have a big idea or a big aspiration, I at least give it a shot.

**How much of *The Office* is scripted, and how much is ad-libbed?**

Chris Barszcz  
GREEN BAY, WIS.

Virtually none of it is ad-libbed. We have the greatest writers in television, truly. They write every "um" and "ah" and beat and pause. We are all talentless on the show and can do nothing without writers. That's basically what I'm saying.

**Are you worried about being typecast as the nice guy?**

Kelly Ermolowich  
LITTLE FALLS, N.J.

I think there are a lot worse things you could be typecast as.

**I can't stop using the "That's what she said" joke made famous by *The Office*. Do you have the same problem, or is it only hard for me?**

Molly Kordares  
NEW YORK CITY

We have the exact same problem. And let me tell you something, it is way more pathetic than that you have that problem. We love, love, love using it. That's what she said. ■



VIDEO AT TIME.COM

**To watch a video interview with John Krasinski**

and to subscribe to the 10 Questions podcast on iTunes, go to [time.com/10questions](http://time.com/10questions)

## GETTING HELP MANAGING MY SYMPTOMS WAS A WAY TO MOVE FORWARD.

### Maybe ABILIFY can help you.

ABILIFY (aripiprazole) is clinically proven to help control the symptoms of manic and mixed episodes of Bipolar I Disorder in adults and in pediatric patients 10 to 17 years of age. It is one of many treatment options.

Hundreds of thousands of adult patients have been prescribed ABILIFY. Ask your healthcare professional if once-a-day ABILIFY is right for you.



### FOR THE ROAD AHEAD

[www.abilify.com/bipolardisorder](http://www.abilify.com/bipolardisorder)

#### IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:

Elderly patients with dementia-related psychosis (for example, an inability to perform daily activities due to increased memory loss) taking ABILIFY have an increased risk of death or stroke. ABILIFY is not approved for treating these patients.

Some medicines can increase suicidal thoughts and behaviors in children, teens, and young adults. Serious mental illnesses are themselves associated with an increase in the risk of suicide. When taking ABILIFY call your doctor right away if you have new or worsening mood symptoms, unusual changes in behavior, or thoughts of suicide. Patients and their caregivers should be especially observant within the first few months of treatment or after a change in dose.

- Alert your doctor if you develop very high fever, rigid muscles, shaking, confusion, sweating, or increased heart rate and blood pressure, as these may be signs of a rare but potentially fatal condition called neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS)
- If you develop abnormal or uncontrollable facial movements, notify your doctor, as these may be signs of tardive dyskinesia (TD), which could become permanent
- If you have diabetes or have risk factors or symptoms of diabetes, your blood sugar should be monitored. High blood sugar has been reported with ABILIFY and medicines like it. In some cases, extreme high blood sugar can lead to coma or death
- Other risks may include lightheadedness upon standing, seizures, trouble swallowing, or impairment in judgment or motor skills. Until you know how ABILIFY affects you, you should not drive or operate machinery

Most common side effects ( $\geq 10\%$ ) from all clinical trials involving adults or pediatric patients include:

- **ADULTS:** Nausea, vomiting, constipation, headache, dizziness, an inner sense of restlessness or need to move (akathisia), anxiety, insomnia, and restlessness
- **PEDIATRIC PATIENTS (10 to 17 years):** Extrapyramidal disorder (for example, uncontrolled movement disorders or muscle disturbances such as restlessness, tremors and muscle stiffness), headache, sleepiness, and nausea

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you're taking, since there are some risks for drug interactions. You should avoid alcohol while taking ABILIFY.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch), or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please read the Important Product Information about ABILIFY on the adjacent page.

Individual results may vary. Actor portrayal.







## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT ABILIFY

2, 5, 10, 15, 20, 30 mg Tablets

This summary of the Package Insert contains risk and safety information for patients about ABILIFY. This summary does not include all information about ABILIFY and does not take the place of discussions with your healthcare professional about your treatment. Please read this important information before you start taking ABILIFY and discuss any questions about ABILIFY with your healthcare professional.

### Name

ABILIFY® (o-BIL-i-fil) (aripiprazole) (air-i-PIP-re-zoll)

### What is ABILIFY (aripiprazole)?

ABILIFY is a prescription medicine used alone or with lithium or divalproex to treat manic or mixed episodes of Bipolar I Disorder in adults or pediatric patients (10 to 17 years).

### What is Bipolar I Disorder?

Bipolar I Disorder is an illness with symptoms thought to be caused by an imbalance of brain chemicals. People who have Bipolar I Disorder tend to experience extreme mood swings, along with other specific symptoms and behaviors. These mood swings, or "episodes," can take three forms: manic, depressive, or mixed episodes. Common symptoms of a manic episode are: feeling extremely happy, being very irritable and anxious, talking too fast and too much, and having more energy and needing less sleep than usual. Common symptoms of a depressive episode include: feelings of overwhelming sadness or emptiness, low energy, a loss of interest in things, trouble concentrating, changes in sleep or appetite, and thoughts of dying or suicide. A mixed episode includes symptoms that are both manic and depressive.

### Who should NOT take ABILIFY?

People who are allergic to ABILIFY or to any substance that is in it. Allergic reactions have ranged from rash, hives and itching to difficulty breathing and swelling of the face, lips, or tongue. Please talk with your healthcare professional.

### What is the most important information that I should know about ABILIFY?

Elderly patients, diagnosed with psychosis as a result of dementia (for example, an inability to perform daily activities as a result of increased memory loss), and who are treated with antipsychotic medicines including ABILIFY, are at an increased risk of death when compared to patients who are treated with a placebo (sugar pill). ABILIFY is not approved for the treatment of patients with dementia-related psychosis.

Some medicines can increase suicidal thoughts and behaviors in children, teens, and young adults. Serious mental illnesses are themselves associated with an increase in the risk of suicide. When taking ABILIFY call your doctor right away if you have new or worsening mood symptoms, unusual changes in behavior, or thoughts of suicide. Patients and their caregivers should be especially observant within the first few months of treatment or after a change in dose.

Serious side effects can occur with any antipsychotic medicine, including ABILIFY. Tell your healthcare professional right away if you have any conditions or side effects, including the following:

**Stroke or ministroke in elderly patients with dementia:** An increased risk of stroke and ministroke has been reported in clinical studies of elderly patients with dementia (for example, increased memory loss and inability to perform daily activities). ABILIFY is not approved for treating patients with dementia.

**Neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS):** Very high fever, rigid muscles, shaking, confusion, sweating, or increased heart rate and blood pressure may be signs of NMS, a rare but serious side effect that could be fatal.

**Tardive dyskinesia (TD):** Abnormal or uncontrollable movements of face, tongue, or other parts of body may be signs of a serious condition known as TD, which may be permanent.

**High blood sugar and diabetes:** Patients with diabetes and those having risk factors for diabetes (for example, obesity, family history of diabetes), as well as those with symptoms such as unexpected increases in thirst, urination, or hunger should have their blood sugar levels checked before and during treatment. Increases in blood sugar levels (hyperglycemia), in some cases serious and associated with coma or death, have been reported in patients taking ABILIFY, and medicines like it.

**Orthostatic hypotension:** Lightheadedness or faintness caused by a sudden change in heart rate and blood pressure when rising too quickly from a sitting or lying position (orthostatic hypotension) has been reported with ABILIFY.

**Suicidal thoughts:** If you have suicidal thoughts, you should tell your healthcare professional right away.

**Dysphagia:** Medicines like ABILIFY have been associated with swallowing problems (dysphagia). If you had or have swallowing problems, you should tell your healthcare professional.

### What should I talk to my healthcare provider about?

Patients and their families or caregivers should watch for new or worsening mood symptoms, unusual changes in behavior and thoughts of suicide, as well as for anxiety, agitation, panic attacks, difficulty sleeping, irritability, hostility, aggressiveness, impulsivity, restlessness, or extreme hyperactivity. Call your healthcare provider right away if you have thoughts of suicide or if any of these symptoms are severe or occur suddenly. Be especially observant within the first few months of antidepressant treatment or whenever there is a change in dose.

### Tell your healthcare provider:

- About any medical conditions you may have
- Whether you're taking any other prescription or nonprescription (over-the-counter) medicines
- Whether you're pregnant, plan to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding
- If you or anyone in your family has had seizures
- If you or anyone in your family has had high blood sugar or diabetes

### What should I avoid when taking ABILIFY (aripiprazole)?

- Avoid overheating and dehydration
- Avoid driving or operating hazardous machinery until you know how ABILIFY affects you
- Avoid drinking alcohol
- Avoid breast-feeding an infant

### What are the possible side effects of ABILIFY?

Common side effects in adults include: nausea, vomiting, constipation, headache, dizziness, an inner sense of restlessness or need to move (akathisia), anxiety and insomnia.

Common side effects in pediatric patients (10 to 17 years) include: extrapyramidal disorder (for example, uncontrolled movement disorders or muscle disturbances such as restlessness, tremors and muscle stiffness), headache, sleepiness, and nausea.

It is important to contact your healthcare professional if you experience prolonged, abnormal muscle spasm or contraction which may be signs of a condition called dystonia.

### What percentage of people stopped taking ABILIFY due to side effects?

In clinical trials, the percentage of adults who discontinued taking ABILIFY due to side effects was ABILIFY (11%) and for patients treated with sugar pill (9%).

In clinical trials, the percentage of pediatric patients (10 to 17 years) who discontinued taking ABILIFY due to side effects was ABILIFY (7%) and for patients treated with sugar pill (2%).

### Can I safely take ABILIFY while I'm taking other medications?

ABILIFY can be taken with most drugs; however, taking ABILIFY with some medicines may require your healthcare professional to adjust the dosage of ABILIFY.

Some medicines\* include:

- ketoconazole (NIZORAL®)
- quindine (QUINIDEX®)
- fluoxetine (PROZAC®)
- paroxetine (PAXIL®)
- carbamazepine (TEGRETOL®)

It is important to tell your healthcare professional about all the medicines you're taking, just to be sure.

### General advice about ABILIFY:

- ABILIFY is usually taken once a day, with or without food
- ABILIFY should be kept out of the reach of children and pets
- Store ABILIFY Tablets and the Oral Solution at room temperature
- For patients who must limit their sugar intake, be aware that ABILIFY Oral Solution contains sugar
- For patients who cannot metabolize phenylalanine (those with phenylketonuria or PKU), ABILIFY DISCMLT® contains phenylalanine
- If you have additional questions, talk to your healthcare professional

### Find out more about ABILIFY:

Additional information can be found at [www.abilify.com/bipolarisorder](http://www.abilify.com/bipolarisorder)

\* NIZORAL is a registered trademark of Janssen Pharmaceutica; QUINIDEX is a registered trademark of Wyeth Pharmaceuticals; PROZAC is a registered trademark of Eli Lilly and Company; PAXIL is a registered trademark of GlaxoSmithKline; TEGRETOL is a registered trademark of Novartis Pharmaceuticals.

Based on Full Prescribing Information as of 11/08 12395504A.

Bristol-Myers Squibb Otsuka Otsuka America Pharmaceutical, Inc.

Tablets manufactured by Otsuka Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd., Tokyo, 101-8535 Japan or Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, Princeton, NJ 08543 USA.  
Orally Disintegrating Tablets, Oral Solution, and Injection manufactured by Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, Princeton, NJ 08543 USA.  
Distributed and marketed by Otsuka America Pharmaceutical, Inc., MO 20850 USA.  
Marketed by Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, Princeton, NJ 08543 USA.  
U.S. Patent Nos. 5,006,528; 6,977,257; and 7,115,587.

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570US08CBS01502 0309Y-1985 Printed in USA D6-80001D-11-08-80 November 2008



To Our Readers

# Technology and Culture.

New forms of communication like Twitter are changing the way we relate to one another. It's a good idea to adapt to them

AT 7:45 A.M. ON JUNE 4, STEVEN JOHNSON sent a tweet to his more than 500,000 followers on Twitter, informing them that he had written this week's cover story about how Twitter is changing the way society communicates. That tweet is also this week's cover image. I know this is all a bit *meta* and like trying to capture digital lightning in a jar, but we thought it was a way of illustrating how new platforms and social networks are changing the way we communicate and live.

While I can't write what I want to say about Twitter in only 140 characters (the maximum number you can use in a tweet), there is an admirable brevity to tweets that is increasingly rare in our culture. I would argue that Twitter is a uniquely democratic form of communication—that is, it's open to everyone, there is no central authority, and people vote on whom and what they like by signing up to be followers. It's about the wisdom—or folly—of crowds. It's also, as Johnson observes in his superb piece, a prototype of a new kind of shared national experience: people talking to one another in real time about real events.

Some argue that Twitter is a form of digital narcissism, the toy of the moment for an attention-deficit-disordered culture. But as Johnson notes, the Twitter platform is ultimately about an accretion of tweets, the way hundreds of thousands of pixels form a detailed and complex digital image. Twitter underscores Marshall McLuhan's famous aphorism that the medium is the message—the idea that technological form shapes and determines the culture. McLuhan challenged the traditional notion that content—whether in print, in film or on television—is automatically more significant than the medium through which it is delivered. What we now accept is that the medium changes the nature of what, and how, we communicate. Twitter does that too.

**TIME Tweets** TIME.COM has close to 700,000 Twitter followers and sends updates every hour



**Connecting the dots** Johnson, the author of six books, often writes about how technology is transforming the ways in which we interact

Historically, the most powerful new mediums have changed the way we perceive the world—and how we relate to one another. The telephone, television and Internet have done that in ways we are still processing. But technology itself is neutral. It's a tool, neither good nor evil. It's all in how we use it. Twitter itself may continue to rise or it may go away, but its characteristics—real-time conversation, instant links, groups of followers—will

affect the platforms that come after. There's a lesson in that for all of us in the media, for we must adapt to new technology, and not simply by putting the same old wine in new bottles. We need to adapt by creating our content in a way that is organic to those new mediums. TIME was on to this idea when we made user-generated content (that is, You) the Person of the Year in 2006, and we have continued to monitor how individuals are changing the media and how we communicate. At the same time, we're focused on bringing you the information you need in new ways that are adapted to new technologies.

*Rich*

Richard Stengel, MANAGING EDITOR

# Inbox



## 21st Century First Lady

A SPOT-ON INSIGHT INTO MICHELLE OBAMA, with one exception: you forgot to mention our First Lady's sorely needed attention to the families of our armed services [June 1]. Our returning soldiers, especially the wounded, need to know we care about them, and she is reminding us of that.

David Jensen, STAMFORD, CONN.

TO SEE MICHELLE OBAMA, THE GREAT-granddaughter of slaves, up close is to finally see America up close. Until her arrival, most Americans did not know the White House and Capitol were built by slaves. For those who contributed so much to our nation, the time has arrived for their progeny, the Michelles and Baracks, to receive their just due.

Helen H. Gentry, DETROIT

YOUR ARTICLE ABOUT MICHELLE OBAMA was delightful. There is no doubt that she is truly special in many ways. However, I can't escape my negative feelings regarding the angry person first presented to us many months ago. How on earth can the woman represented in your article be the same person who worshipped in a church under the auspices of the Rev. Jeremiah Wright? It still pains me that she could bring her children into such a negative, anti-American environment.

Bette Hirsh Levy  
TARZANA, CALIF.

IN YOUR COVER STORY, YOU NAME MICHELLE Obama "one of the most professionally accomplished First Ladies ever." Yet by failing to detail her vocational accomplishments (lawyer, associate dean at the University of Chicago, senior executive at the University of Chicago Medical Center), you neglect to define her as something other than "Mom in Chief." That is a sacrifice of identity indeed.

Courtney Sender, MONTVALE, N.J.

I'M A CARD-CARRYING DEMOCRAT WHO voted for Barack Obama and would do it again. But you have got to stop treating the First Family as if they were Brad and Angelina and children. Michelle Obama is a beautiful, poised and educated woman, not a Hollywood-celebrity wannabe.

Jeanni Green, DAYTON, OHIO

MICHELLE OBAMA. TWO WORDS: NATIONAL treasure.

Coventry Kessler, GREENSBORO, N.C.

## Where Do You Stand?

NANCY GIBBS' ANALYSIS OF THE RECENT Gallup poll regarding abortion rights was intriguing [June 1]. But what has always confused me is the fact that most Republicans are more than willing to legislate and regulate the most intimate and private part of a woman's life. Yet they call for smaller, less intrusive government and are indignant over any limits on the Second

## SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

- In "A Brief History Of: *The Tonight Show*," we misstated the launch year of TV's *Broadway Open House* [June 1]. It first aired in 1950.
- In "How to Make Terrorists Talk," we identified Ali Soufan as an expert witness in cases brought by detainees [June 8]. He is an expert witness in cases against detainees.

Amendment right to bear arms. Where is Republicans' governmental restraint when it comes to women?

Abby Loberg, GRANBY, COLO.

GIBBS' SUGGESTION THAT "MOST PEOPLE are neither pro-choice nor pro-life but both" is ill informed. Since January 1973, Americans have clearly understood this issue and been sharply divided on it. But just in case Gibbs isn't clear: pro-life means, Don't take the life of an unborn child. Pro-choice means, The wants or needs of the pregnant woman supersede the idea that human life is valuable. And the Gallup poll suggests more people are valuing human life. There's no confusion here. This isn't above my pay grade.

Therese Stenzel  
TULSA, OKLA.

## I Get the Picture

THANK YOU, JOE KLEIN, FOR BEING the rare writer to condemn both the use of torture and the release of its images [June 1]. The response to the use of torture should be based on a factual examination, not on a visceral reaction to pictures. Images are not necessary to understand and evaluate what has happened. One can comprehend and assess a story about a murder, for example—and have a complete moral response—without seeing the crime-scene photos.

Nadia El-Badry  
DOBBS FERRY, N.Y.

**'What Peter Schiff understands is basic: any economic system must produce at least what it consumes or go bankrupt.'**

Sebastian Curry, SAN DIEGO

**Early alarm** The broker-pundit (and subject of a *TIME* column) foretold the recession



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INSTRUMENTS FOR PROFESSIONALS™



CHRONOMAT B01

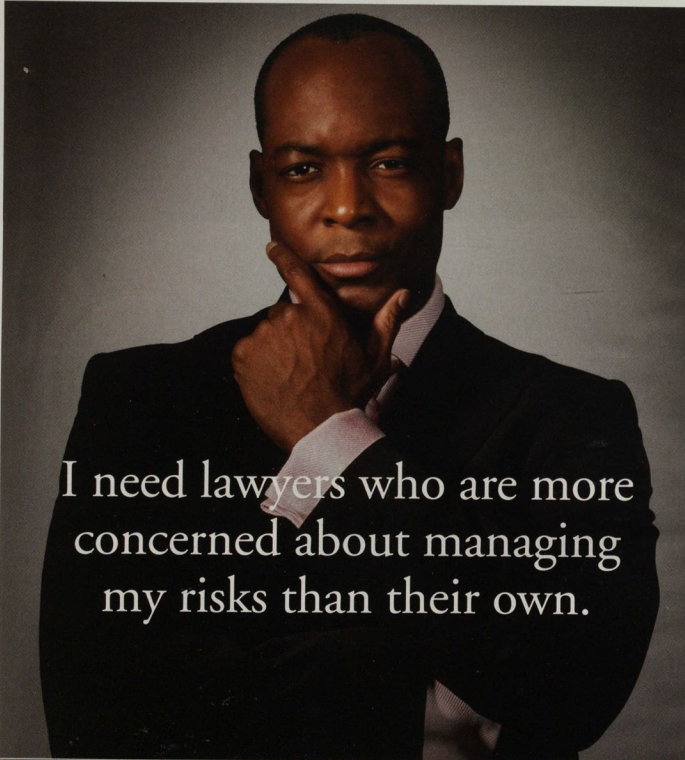
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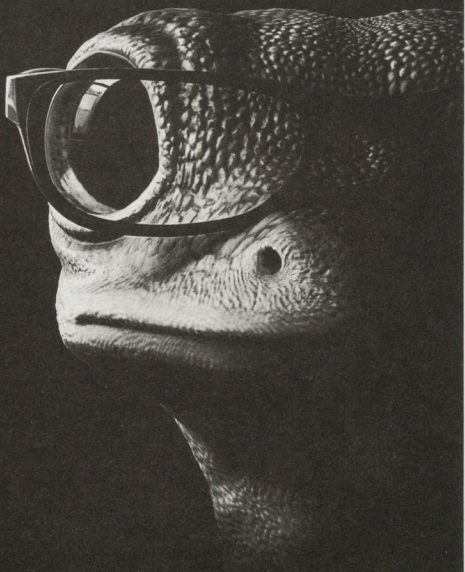
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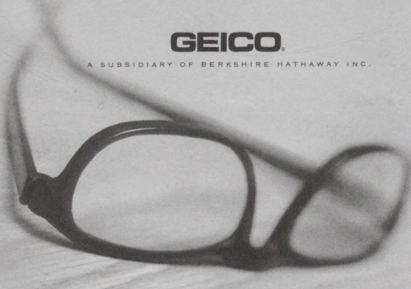
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# Postcard: Wichita. A controversial Kansas abortionist is gunned down in church. But this prairie town grew tired of that culture war long ago. George Tiller's murder won't change that

BY DAVID VON DREHLE/WICHITA

**Global Dispatch**  
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**W**HY, FOR SO MANY YEARS, HAVE flights to Wichita carried so many worried women and frightened girls? Why are certain cemeteries dotted with cryptic messages on tiny headstones? Why have so many fervent souls, fiery with outrage, made the long trip across dry prairies or through flint hills to weep and pray in a parking lot along a busy highway? Why here?

It was never about Wichita. There is no cultural or sociological or historical artifact to explain why this place became a magnet for abortion seekers and protesters alike. The reason was George Tiller. He could have happened anywhere, but he happened here, like a meteor strike.

Tiller was the rare physician willing to follow America's ambivalence about abortion to its ragged edge. In his drab clinic here with hospital beds in the basement, Tiller performed not only comparatively abstract early procedures but also grimly literal late-term abortions. Most people don't want to think about the work Tiller did, but some had no choice—either they needed to see him or they felt duty-bound to try to stop him.

So they came to Wichita, whether folks here wanted them or not—thousands of protesters, most notably during the so-called Summer of Mercy in 1991, and thousands of patients, month in and month out, for heart-ache knows no season. One of those drawn to him, a Kansas City-area man named Scott Roeder, allegedly shot Tiller dead on May 31—which in turn attracted reporters from across the country.

Kansas has a knowing relationship with radicals. A portrait of abolitionist John Brown—gun in one hand, Bible in the other—occupies a place of honor at the state capital in Topeka. Bar-bashing Carry Nation took her hatchet to some of the best saloons in the state. Wichitans long



**Surprised by the limelight** Quiet Wichita never asked to be ground zero in the abortion wars

ago processed the fact that a doctor with a mansion in the suburbs were not just a gown to work but also a bulletproof vest. They kept it at arm's length, though. Some places, like some people, seem to relish any sort of attention. Not this place. No one even slowed while passing the TV trucks at the courthouse, and Mayor Carl Brewer looked queasy when I stopped him outside a city-council meeting. Not a word about Tiller, the mayor insisted.

He warmed up only when asked about job losses in the city's storied but stricken aircraft industry. Eric Cale runs the city's historical museum—appropriately, given that his family has been here almost from the founding of Wichita

in 1863. Searching for the right word to explain his town, Cale settles on "remote"—both in geography and in mood—then adds "circumspect." Pam Siddall understands. When she arrived last year to take charge of the local newspaper, the Alabama native asked around for a good church. She was amazed to find that Wichitans prefer

not to talk about such personal matters.

For years at Reformation Lutheran, where the doctor was slain in the foyer as Sunday services were starting, anti-abortion protesters held Sunday vigils. Men stretched their sport coats to cover their children's eyes as they passed gruesome posters of dismembered fetuses on their way into Sunday school. And yet, according to one parishioner, the congregation never discussed Tiller's membership, one way or the other.

If Chicago is the city of broad shoulders, Wichita is a city of low profiles, of taciturn factory workers and reticent billionaires. Did you know that a Wichita musician named Gage Brewer was the first to whang an electric guitar in concert? Of course you didn't. Or that the first organized sit-in to desegregate a lunch counter took place in a Wichita Rexall? Many of the kids who participated never even told their parents.

"A wonderfully quiet town," says local anchorman Larry Hatteberg, "that is sometimes shocked into the limelight." Donna Tucker, a local jazz singer, hears that and goes wide-eyed. "Oh, that's perfect!" she says. "Shocked into the limelight."



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Allô!

¡Hola!

Hallo!

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# Briefing

THE WORLD SPOTLIGHT HISTORY VERBATIM

POP CHART MILESTONES



## The Moment

6|10|09: Paris

IT'S ALWAYS UNSETTLING when you know—yet don't *really* know—that something awful has happened, which may be why the loss of Air France Flight 447 over the Atlantic, on its way from Rio de Janeiro to Paris, seems so poignant. In their heads, those waiting for their loved ones at Charles de Gaulle Airport, their hands covering their faces in the universal reflex of grief, must have known there was no hope. In their hearts, they could be forgiven for

holding on to the slim prospect of good news. And then, two days later, far out at sea, the debris of the Airbus A330 was found.

That debris—a slick of oil, pieces of metal and plastic—had the quality of weight in a world that is becoming weightless. We have become so used to data whizzing at the speed of light from one continent to another, bits of information reforming themselves into text, images and video, that we are in danger of forget-

ting the technology that truly released us from the tyranny of distance, and how recently. The first airplane flew on the sand dunes of North Carolina only 106 years ago. As an option for regular folk, intercontinental air travel is less than

**The miracle of flight can seem routine—until a tragedy happens**

40 years old (the Boeing 747 entered service in 1970). Yet in no time at all we have come to regard it as a natural part of the order of things. Flight 447's route is some 5,700 miles (9,200 km) long—within easy memory, an impossible

distance for any scheduled flight to have managed. Today, when you can fly in one hop from Singapore to Newark, N.J.—more than 9,500 miles (15,000 km)—Rio to Paris hardly seems impressive.

Still, hold that insouciance. Aviation has changed us: it has shrunk the planet, altered our sense of the possible, made the strange familiar. Tragedies can often highlight the significance of that which we have come to consider commonplace. Which makes it a good time not just to mourn those who died this week but to remember all who, for a century, have built and flown the great birds that make our world one. —BY MICHAEL ELLIOTT ■



# The World

10 ESSENTIAL STORIES



A member of the Brazilian air force surveys the sea for remains of the Air France jetliner

## 1 | Brazil

### What Happened to Flight 447?

On June 2, search teams combing the Atlantic Ocean discovered bobbing wreckage from the Air France jet that vanished between Brazil and West Africa two days earlier. But the mystery of why the Airbus A330 went down may endure—a lead investigator suggested that the doomed aircraft's voice and data recorders may never be plucked from the mountainous ocean floor, more than a mile below. Meteorologists suspect the wide-body jet encountered a band of towering thunderstorms packing 100-m.p.h. (160 km/h) winds as it flew from Rio de Janeiro to Paris, but the precise cause of the catastrophe remained unknown. All 228 people aboard the airliner are presumed dead, making this the deadliest crash in Air France's history and the world's worst civil aviation disaster since 2001.

## 2 | Afghanistan

### Bringing Back Body Counts

Reversing decades of military policy, the U.S. Army has begun regularly releasing statistics on the number of enemy combatants killed in Afghanistan—a figure nearing 2,000 over the past 14 months. The practice of disclosing enemy death tolls was abandoned after the Vietnam War, when they were reportedly inflated to project the illusion of victory. U.S. military officials say releasing casualty tallies will help counter insurgent propaganda.

## 3 | Israel

### Obama, Unsettled

President Obama's hopes of delivering important Israeli concessions to Arab leaders during his landmark Middle East trip dimmed after Israel demurred on

**NATURAL GROWTH**  
Settlers say their adult children need new homes, but 37% of settlements' population increase comes from new arrivals

his call for a halt to the expansion of Jewish settlements into Palestinian territories. Despite repeated U.S. calls for a freeze on new construction, settlers justify

expansion as a way to accommodate the "natural growth" of their communities, shipping in trailer homes, building illegal houses and bulldozing new roads to connect them.



A gamer demonstrates a prototype of Sony's forthcoming motion-control device at E3

## 4 | Los Angeles

### Stalking the Wii

In a bid to combat Nintendo's Wii—the best-selling game console since 2006—Microsoft and Sony announced motion-based controls of their own at this year's Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3). Sony's wireless wand emits light tracked by a camera, while Microsoft's Project Natal eliminates the controller entirely, using a 3-D system to detect a player's body movements. Don't rest your thumbs yet: Sony's device won't be available until 2010; Microsoft has yet to set a release date.

## 5 | Rome

### 'Spicy' Affair Stays Hot

Allegations by Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's wife in early May that he had an improper relationship with an underage model have embroiled the popular leader in scandal on the eve of elections for the European Parliament. Berlusconi has vigorously denied any "spicy" activities with Noemi Letizia, now 18. Meanwhile, authorities have banned publication of photos allegedly showing seminaked women cavorting at his Sardinian villa.

## 6 | London

### Bad News Blears

Communities Secretary Hazel Blears became the fourth member of Prime Minister Gordon Brown's Cabinet to resign in a scandal over British lawmakers' lavish expenses that has implicated more than 200 of Parliament's 646 members. The crisis has prompted calls for the embattled Prime Minister's removal and reports of a likely government shake-up.

Numbers: **52%**

Percentage of Americans who believe torture is justified to prevent terrorist attacks, according to a recent survey

**83%**

Increase in the amount of time Americans spent on social-networking sites in April, compared with the same month a year earlier



## 7 | Tehran

**ELECTION SHOWDOWN** With Iran's presidential election quickly approaching, competition among the four main contenders is heating up. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and former Prime Minister Mir-Hossein Mousavi (above) are the current front runners; they face off against Mohsen Rezai, former chief of the Revolutionary Guard, and respected cleric Mehdi Karubi. On June 3, during a televised presidential debate, reformist candidate Mousavi came out with guns blazing, accusing Ahmadinejad of "undermining" Iran's dignity and criticizing his "mismanagement" of the country's faltering economy. Voting begins on June 12.

## 8 | South Africa

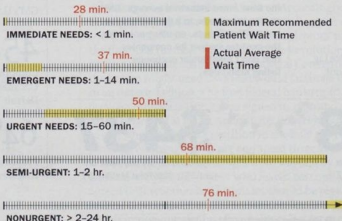
### Underground Tragedy

The bodies of at least 61 illegal miners were discovered in an unused shaft owned by South Africa's Harmony Mining Co., the world's fifth largest gold producer. The incident, one of the worst in the nation's history, highlights the growing problem posed by unauthorized mining operations, which are exploiting thousands of miles of unpoliced tunnels amid high unemployment rates and spiking gold prices.

## 9 | Washington

### Putting the Emergency Back in Emergency Room

According to a report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office, wait times in ERs across the nation are at worrying lengths. Largely because of overcrowding, patients can languish twice as long as recommended by medical associations; those in need of the fastest attention may wait nearly half an hour for care.



SOURCE: U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

## 10 | Minnesota

### The Eternal Senate-Seat Battle

More than 200 days after voters went to the polls, Minnesota has yet to seat its junior U.S. Senator. On June 1, the state's supreme court heard arguments on the intricacies of absentee-ballot rules, which the incumbent candidate, Republican Norm Coleman, contends were inconsistently applied and would therefore invalidate a lower-court ruling that Democrat Al Franken won the race by a margin of just 312 votes. The court is expected to rule on the issue within weeks. Franken's admission to the Senate would give Democrats a 60-vote majority, which would enable them to override Republican filibusters.



**NORM COLEMAN**  
Supports offshore drilling, gun rights and a gay-marriage ban. Hinted at a federal appeal if he loses in Minnesota's Supreme Court.



**AL FRANKEN**  
In favor of universal health care, renewable energy, fair trade and immigration reform. Was declared the victor by recount.

### ( RECESSION WATCH )



When the going gets tough, Latvians ... go blonde. Saddled with a **troubled economy that is expected to shrink as much as 18% this year**, the former Soviet nation enlisted the help of more than 500 towheaded beauties to lead a "Go Blonde" weekend on May 30-31. The feel-good extravaganza included sporting events, fashion shows and a parade through the capital, Riga, where rioting erupted in February over rising unemployment.



2.3

BILLION

Estimated years scientists now say the earth will remain habitable before the sun fries it—about 1 billion years longer than previously thought

19,273

Number of swine-flu cases confirmed by the World Health Organization, which announced it is close to declaring the virus a pandemic

# Spotlight:

## The Future of GM

# 4<sup>TH</sup>

largest bankruptcy in U.S. history. With more than \$82 billion in assets, GM became the largest industrial company to file for Chapter 11. The biggest loser in absolute size is Lehman Brothers, with \$639 billion in assets, followed by Washington Mutual and WorldCom

IN BILLIONS:



Lehman Brothers



Washington Mutual

\$104

WorldCom

\$82

General Motors

Sources: Edmunds.com; BankruptcyData.com; AP; New York Times



**\$172.8 BILLION**

Debts listed by GM in its bankruptcy filing, the second highest amount ever, eclipsed only by Lehman Brothers

**\$27 BILLION**

Amount GM owes to its bondholders

**\$30.9 BILLION**

Amount GM lost in 2008

**\$20.6 BILLION**

Amount already received in Treasury loans

**\$50 BILLION**

Total government aid GM will receive, including \$9.5 billion from the Canadian government

**\$100 BILLION**

Estimated total public price tag for the auto-industry bailout

**\$438**

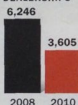
Typical monthly payment on a **NEW** Chevrolet Malibu LTZ

**\$437**

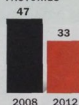
Typical monthly payment on a **USED** Chevrolet Malibu LTZ

## A shrinking workforce and sales network:

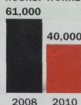
DEALERSHIPS



FACTORIES

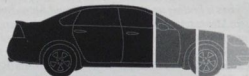


HOURLY WORKERS



11,500: Number of suppliers in North America

## Who owns GM now?



**60.8%**  
of common equity will be owned by the U.S. Treasury

**17.5%**  
by the Voluntary Employee Benefit Association (VEBA), the UAW health-care trust

**11.7%**  
by the Canadian government

**10%**  
reserved for GM for unsecured bondholders and other unsecured creditors

## June 8

General Motors will be delisted from the Dow Jones Industrial average. GM shares then trade, in a limited fashion, on the Pink Sheets, an electronic over-the-counter system for companies that don't meet major exchange listing standards

**20.5%**

GM's U.S. market share in May

**45.8%**

Combined monthly U.S. market share of the Detroit Three

**64%**

Proportion of GM's total sales that were outside the U.S.

**8** Number of U.S. brands. GM also owns part of 5 brands overseas, including Opel and Vauxhall

**4** Number of brands GM is trying to unload. It recently agreed to sell Hummer to a Chinese firm. It has Pontiac could be junked. GM's newly consolidated European arm, Opel, is being sold to Magna/Stellantis



**BUICK**  
Incorporated in 1903  
by William C. Durant



**CADILLAC**  
Founded 1902  
Acquired 1905



**GMC**  
Founded 1902  
Acquired 1909



**CHEVROLET**  
Founded 1910  
Acquired 1917



**PONTIAC**  
Acquired 1909  
Phaseout 2010?



**SAAB**  
Acquired 1990  
FOR SALE



**SATURN**  
Introduced 1983  
FOR SALE

# A Brief History Of:

## Bankruptcy

**8.35 million** GM cars and trucks were sold in 2008



**CHINA: 1.09 MILLION**



**BRAZIL: 550,000 (EST.)**



**U.K.: 383,678**



**CANADA: 358,902**



**RUSSIA: 337,810**



**GERMANY: 299,708**

**77**

Number of years GM was the world's largest automaker. (Today's largest: Toyota)

potential buyers for Saturn and Saab, but bank/GAZ, a Russo-Canadian partnership



**HUMMER**  
Acquired 1999  
SOLD 2009



**W**ITH APOLOGIES TO APPLE PIE, BANKRUPTCY IS AS American as it gets. From the earliest days of the Republic to General Motors' June 1 filing for Chapter 11, debt relief has been at the center of a tug-of-war between competing Yankee principles: reinvention and responsibility.

In Colonial America—where moneylending was governed as much by moral codes as by legal ones—defaulting on your debts was considered a moral failing. Accordingly, owing as little as 40 shillings (less than the price of a fine pair of bedsheets) could get you thrown into a Dickensian debtors' prison. Amid the financial turmoil that followed the Revolutionary War, however, delegates to the Constitutional Convention predicted the nation might need laws that would facilitate going belly-up in an orderly fashion. The first federal bankruptcy law, which drew on English statutes, was signed in 1800 and redounded to the benefit of at least one delegate: Robert Morris of Pennsylvania, who wound up \$3 million in the hole after opening his purse to Washington's army and spent three years locked up.

Further legislative attempts were waylaid by interest groups and states'-rights advocates, who feared corruption and disagreed over whether bankruptcies should be regulated by the Federal Government at all. The Bankruptcy Act of 1898 expanded debt protection not just for creditors but for corporations as well, but as late as the 1970s, most highbrow firms still saw bankruptcy as an undignified fire sale. Looking to help steer more troubled companies back into the black, Congress simplified filing for both personal and corporate bankruptcy. The change got results: From 1980 to 2005, the number of bankruptcies increased sixfold. A stricter 2005 law made a dent in the number, but four years later, it's climbing once more. —BY LAURA FITZPATRICK

**Cashing out** Hoping for a fresh beginning, debtors and creditors line up at a bankruptcy court in New York City

### GOING FOR BROKE

**450**

Debt-ridden Romans are reportedly dismembered and their limbs distributed to creditors

**1542**

An early English bankruptcy law allows defaulting debtors to be put to death

**1901**

Henry Ford's first auto company files for bankruptcy

**1915**

The U.S. Supreme Court rules that bankruptcy laws should give honest debtors a chance "to start afresh"

**2008**

Lehman Bros. goes under with \$639 billion in assets, the largest U.S. bankruptcy to date





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# Verbatim

'I think, you know, freedom means freedom for everyone.'

**DICK CHENEY**, former U.S. Vice President, explaining his support for gay marriage

'It was like living a lie.'

**OSEL HITA TORRES**, the boy identified by the Dalai Lama as the reincarnation of a Tibetan spiritual leader, on his decision to abandon the Buddhist order

'Here we are at the deathbed of General Motors. The company's body not yet cold, and I find myself filled with—dare I say it—joy.'

**MICHAEL MOORE**, Michigan native and director of the 1989 anti-GM documentary *Roger & Me*, after the automaker filed for bankruptcy on June 1

'You're a disgrace.'

**MICHAEL BLOOMBERG**, New York City mayor, responding to a reporter who asked if the improving economy undercuts the billionaire's justification for seeking a third term

'If anything surprises me, it's that it took them so long.'

**KAISER KUO**, a Beijing-based blogger, on the Chinese government's blocking access to websites like Twitter two days before the 20th anniversary of the bloody crackdown on demonstrators in Tiananmen Square

'I never thought that Kim Jong Il was human and thus mortal.'

**OH YEON-JONG**, a North Korean defector, after American and South Korean officials confirmed that the ailing dictator had chosen his youngest son, Kim Jong Un, to succeed him

'It was needless hugging ... It wasn't a greeting. It was happening all day.'

**NOREEN HAJJILIAN**, principal of a New Jersey middle school that has banned hugging



## Back & Forth:

### Supreme Court

'The entire concept of the American rule of law is blindfolded justice.'

**JEFF SESSIONS**, the top Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee, criticizing Judge Sonia Sotomayor, Barack Obama's Supreme Court nominee, for her 2001 remark that a "wise Latina woman, with the richness of her experiences," would be better equipped to make certain decisions than a white man would

'I don't think anybody wants nine Justices on the Supreme Court who have ice water in their veins.'

Senator **CHUCK SCHUMER**, arguing that Sotomayor was correct to say that factors like diversity and life experience can play a role in judicial rulings

### White House

'I think he has to realize that flying to New York is self-indulgent. Go down to the corner bar and have a drink, a shot and a beer.'

**RICK SANTORUM**, former Pennsylvania Senator, slamming the Obama Administration for spending an estimated \$24,000 to send the President and First Lady to Manhattan for dinner and a Broadway show

'The costs are proportionate with other Presidents.'

White House press secretary **ROBERT GIBBS**, defending the use of taxpayer money for a private social outing

### LEXICON

**Laodicean adj.**—The word spelled by 13-year-old Kavya Shivashankar to win the 2009 Scripps National Spelling Bee

**USAGE:** "The eighth-grader won \$40,000 in cash and prizes for nailing the final word—which means lukewarm or indifferent, particularly in matters of politics or religion." —CNN, May 29, 2009



# Pop Chart



**WILL FERRELL** suntan lotion?



Famous recluse **J.D. SALINGER** apparently not too reclusive to sue



**WHERE'S WALDO?** on the big screen: two hours of strained eyesight and frustration



**SUSAN BOYLE** loses Britain's Got Talent, immediately pulls a Winehouse



**GILLETTE** and **SCHICK** enter the personal-topiary market



Infinitesummer.org: an online support group for people who can't finish **INFINITE JEST**



*American Idol* runner-up **ADAM LAMBERT** holds hands with a man



**OCTOMOM** inks reality-TV-show deal

## SHOCKING

**AMERICAN GIRL** accidentally names new doll after domestic terrorist wanted by the FBI for arson



New HBO show **HUNG** is about exactly what you think it's about



Memphis-area **BURGER KING** unimpressed by climate change



**DANIEL CRAIG** POPSICLE: both delicious and wrong

## PREDICTABLE



Microsoft names new **SEARCH ENGINE** after the sound a toaster makes



Amex and **COURTNEY LOVE** in dispute over \$350,000 in unpaid bills. So *that's* what happened to the economy



**TLC** wants to ruin the lives of another family with multiple children. You listening, Octomom?



Obviously staged **EMINEM-AND-BRUNO** MTV stunt fools no one

## SHOCKINGLY PREDICTABLE



# Milestones



## George Tiller

WHEN DR. GEORGE TILLER, THE U.S.'s best-known provider of late-term abortions, was shot in the head on the morning of May 31 while serving as an usher at his Lutheran church in Wichita, Kans., both sides of the abortion debate braced for battle. Supporters called him a martyr; critics called him a murderer. Both groups

deplored his killing; abortion-rights activists warned that it could signal a fresh wave of civil violence; abortion opponents warned that it would lead to the demonizing of their movement.

Tiller, who had originally planned to become a dermatologist, lived with the knowledge that his actions made him a target. There are only a handful of clinics in the country where women can obtain an abortion late in pregnancy; Tiller's was bombed in 1986. In 1993 he was shot in both arms. He received death threats regularly, wore body armor and



**Dangerous ground** The church where Tiller was shot to death

traveled with a guard dog. Just a few weeks ago, the clinic's security cameras and lights were vandalized; Tiller asked the FBI to investigate. He was repeatedly tried—and recently acquitted—on charges of violating state laws governing late-term abortions. Why did he do it? "Women and families are intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and ethically competent to struggle with complex health issues—including abortion," he said, "and come to decisions that are appropriate for themselves."

The abortion debate typically occurs within the boundaries a democracy sets, ones of peaceful, if not always respectful, debate and advocacy on both sides. But Tiller's murder reminds us that in matters of life and death, the argument itself can become a matter of life and death.

—BY NANCY GIBBS



## Millvina Dean

WHEN SHE ATTENDED HER first Titanic Historical Society convention, in 1988, Millvina Dean, who died May 31 at 97, had never flown in a plane or stayed in a hotel. But her quiet life turned into one of celebrity, as she was soon traveling the world to speak about surviving the *Titanic* disaster as an infant. Fans and report-

ers flocked to her bungalow in Britain's New Forest for tea and homemade sloe gin. They quickly discovered she was full of humor, charm and vitality—qualities that made her an interviewer's dream.

**Memento** Dean's family luggage, auctioned in 2008



Her sudden fame was a lifetime away from the dark hours she and her mother had spent in a crowded lifeboat in the North Atlantic after the *Titanic* sank in 1912. Dean's 2-year-old brother was discovered aboard the rescue ship *Carthage*, and the family—minus Dean's father, who drowned—returned safely to England. They were fortunate. Most of the children traveling in third class died.

At 9 weeks, Millvina was the *Titanic*'s youngest survivor. She once lamented that the title prevented her from lying about her age. But she became the public face, and eventually the last survivor, of history's worst maritime tragedy.

—BY DON LYNCH

**Lynch is a co-author of *Titanic: An Illustrated History***

**DIED** "I got addicted," **Karine Ruby, 31**, once said of her passion for snowboarding, which she took up at age 11.

The Frenchwoman, who won six world championships and an Olympic gold medal, died in a climbing accident on France's Mont Blanc May 29.



■ The first Haitian to become a Roman Catholic priest in the U.S., **Gérard Jean-Juste, 62**, led the Miami-based Haitian Refugee Center in the 1970s to promote the rights of the country's immigrants. His efforts enabled Haitians to apply for political asylum, an option that had often been closed to them.

■ **Gaafar Nimeiri, 79**, had a tumultuous tenure as President of Sudan. After assuming power in a 1969 coup, he became an ally of the U.S. But his 1983 imposition



of Islamic law stoked tensions between the country's mainly Muslim north and largely Christian south. While on a 1985 trip to the U.S. to seek aid for Sudan's sagging economy, he was ousted in a bloodless coup.

■ As a lead writer for the classic television comedy *All in the Family*, **Michael Ross, 89**, won an Emmy in 1973. Two years later he created *The Jeffersons*, a popular spin-off.

**SENTENCED** After being convicted of the 2003 murder of actress Lana Clarkson, record producer **Phil Spector, 69**, was sentenced to 19 years in prison on May 29.

**ORDAINED** Although she grew up in a Pentecostal home, on June 6, **Alysa Stanton, 45**, will become the first female African-American rabbi.



TILLER: WIKI; KATIE: AP/WIDEWORLD; CHURCH: LARRY W. SMITH/—GPA; DEAN: JOSH STILLWELL/—AP; SPECTOR: HENRY ALDRIDGE AND SON ASSOCIATES; —AP; NIMEIRI: CHRIS THOMAS/—GLOBE/CONTRAST; STANTON: STEPHEN L. HARRMAN/—AP



James

# Poniewozik

**Not Fade Away. As Jay passes the torch to Conan, he keeps one for himself. But can either hope to unify the audience?**

IT MAY JUST BE COINCIDENCE, BUT *The Tonight Show* somehow seems to know when America is going through a generational moment. Johnny Carson took over the show in Camelot-era 1962, after J.F.K. became the first greatest-generation President. Jay Leno replaced him in 1992, just before baby boomer Bill Clinton defeated our last greatest-generation President. Now, just after Barack Obama's Inauguration, NBC has put another tall, skinny young guy, Conan O'Brien, behind the desk. (O'Brien and Obama, who did a guest bit on Conan's second night, may be technically a hair shy of Gen X status—but as the saying goes in the TV biz, they skew young.)

Conan, at 46, is coming into his own in a way typical of a post-boomer. Like the rest of his age cohort in all walks of life, he's taking over an institution just as it has become diminished. Network TV, newspapers, Social Security, American hegemony—all seem to have stuck around just long enough to crap out on the post-boomers. *The Tonight Show* is still a lucrative platform, but it's not the singular cultural voice it was when Jay took over. Conan competes for attention with Jimmy Kimmel, David Letterman, Stephen Colbert and more—plus whatever happens to be on TiVo, Xbox or the Internet.

And like a good post-boomer, Conan got promoted only to discover that his baby-boomer predecessor is not so keen on retiring after all. Come Sept. 14, Jay, 59, starts his own talk show on NBC at 10 p.m. E.T., where it will compete for guest

**Conan, like the rest of his post-boomer age cohort in all walks of life, is taking over an institution just as it has become diminished**

bookings and suck up media attention.

This made Jay's final *Tonight* an odd experience: a classy, warm goodbye, coupled with reminders that he wasn't going anywhere. Like his generational peer—and best source of material—Bill Clinton, Jay believes in staying active. Hey, you're only as old as you feel, baby!

Of course, like Clinton, Jay—who got his 10 p.m. show for fear he would jump



to ABC—has a wee bit more clout than the average elder boomer pushed out for a younger employee. Conan—simply by having wanted forever to host *The Tonight Show*—is something of a throwback. The very idea of caring about big-network late shows is retro, now that Comedy Central has so much buzz. Conan's comic style also owes heavily to his elder, and now competitor, the 62-year-old Letterman.

Nonetheless, the handoff between Jay and Conan, like a presidential transition, marks a change in style and in the office itself. On the simplest level, the two have different ideas of what's funny. Jay is a master of the topical joke who worked tirelessly on lengthy pulled-from-the-headlines monologues. On his final show, he thanked "all the people who made it possible: Michael Jackson, Monica Lewinsky and Bill Clinton."

Conan's sensibility is less newswy and more surreal, scatological and self-referential. And he has a big self-deprecating streak: on his second show, he had a cash-strapped NBC send him on a wardrobe-shopping spree on Rodeo Road (not Drive) in South Central, where he bought a cornrow wig and a belt buckle that reads BITCH.

**Conan, in other words, revels in being the outsider, the underdog, the geek.** (Jay's signature bit, on the other hand, was "Jay-walking," where he went on the street to ask people news and history questions and made them look ridiculous.) This is

both a defining Gen X trait—think Judd Apatow's movies and Beck's "Loser"—and a sensibility suited to the 12:30 p.m. *Late Night*, the slacker sibling to *The Tonight Show*. Some doubters wonder if that can translate to a broader 11:30 audience. By promoting Conan and moving Jay, NBC is betting that this broad audience has become very different, if it still exists at all.

So far, Conan seems determined not to change his style for an older audience. The idea is if people connect with the host's authenticity, they'll get used to his comedy. But "you can't please all of the people" is more than just an artistic principle here. It's also a recognition that in this fragmented media era, there is no more "all of the people."

And ironically, although Jay is a much more middle-of-the-road comic, his new show is an even more radical experiment. NBC is arguing that broadcast TV has become too small to support expensive scripted shows three hours a night. Though a nightly variety show is the most ancient kind of TV, the boomer's project may define the medium's future.

So the next time Obama does a media blitz, does he do Jay or Conan (or Letterman)? Will he need to do all of them? In the end, the Jay/Conan schism may be less a generational tug-of-war than a recognition that the audience is too diffuse for any one host.

Thus, as J.F.K. said, the torch has been passed to a new generation. But it's now more like a Bic lighter. ■





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Joe

# Klein

## Hot Buttons. Debates over abortion and affirmative action remain dominated by extremists. But sensible positions exist

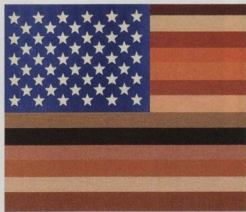
IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS OF THE LAST century, the years before the collapse of the economy and the World Trade Center towers, political discourse in the U.S. was, too often, ruttin' in issues that didn't affect the lives of most people. They were important moral and symbolic issues, to be sure. And they were difficult issues, although their subtleties were obscured by extremists, who tended to dominate the debate. Still, the people directly affected by the so-called social issues—abortion, gay marriage, racial preferences—pale in comparison with the tens of millions who have lost their jobs and fortunes in the past year and with the global, life-and-death impact of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Consequently, social issues weren't decisive in the elections of 2006 and 2008, or in the early days of the Obama Administration.

At the end of May, those issues returned with a vengeance. A doctor who specialized in the most controversial sorts of abortions was murdered in Kansas. President Obama nominated Sonia Sotomayor to the Supreme Court, which restarted a tired debate about affirmative action. And while the blowhards have taken up their battle stations—the leadership of the Republican Party, especially, seems to have shifted from politics to infotainment—the terrain on these issues has shifted subtly in the past few years. (Indeed, gay marriage—once the hottest of hot buttons—seems to be easing toward public acceptance, as state after state approves it.)

"George Tiller was a mass murderer," said the antiabortion extremist Randall Terry after the doctor was murdered in

the lobby of his church. But Terry was an outlier. Most of the pro-life movement reacted with appropriate horror—and the talking heads who had exploited the Tiller situation, like Bill O'Reilly, were subdued for a change.

In truth, Tiller was practicing a form of medicine most Americans find abhorrent. Recent polls show a notable shift away from pro-choice sentiment—in early May, the Gallup Organization recorded a majority of Americans taking a pro-life position for the first time since it began



asking the question in 1995. It's possible that abortion has become less acceptable because of the remarkable advances in sonogram technology. We now can see, in perfect detail, the exquisite humanity that exists within the womb, especially in the later stages of pregnancy. Late-term abortions—no more than a few percent of the total performed in the U.S.—were Tiller's specialty. These are usually hard cases, sometimes the result of rape or incest or the discovery of severe birth defects. But they are, without question, the taking of a life. At the same time, the pro-life community should concede that sex education and the widespread availability of morning after pills and condoms are necessary if we're going to prevent these tragedies.

The Sotomayor debate has been polluted by the likes of Rush Limbaugh and

Newt Gingrich, who claim, ridiculously, that the judge is a racist. That sort of rant is so-o-o 20th century. Beneath the pollution, however, is a serious policy question that needs to be resolved: With an African-American President and a polychromatic society moving toward racial (if not economic) equity, why do we still need preferences enshrined in law?

Obama has suggested that Sotomayor might have chosen her words differently when, in a 2001 speech, she suggested that a Latina raised in a poor neighborhood had an advantage over a privileged white male in judging cases that involved impoverished minorities. Perhaps she should have—although we seem to have reached a quiet consensus that Sotomayor is right, that our national diversity is a splendid advantage in matters of justice and culture. You want to have powerful Latinas—and others, the full panoply of American types—helping make big decisions, not just on the Supreme Court, but in boardrooms, schools and editorial offices. That presence is what makes this society so much more vibrant than it used to be.

**There is a bright line, though. And I** would guess that Sotomayor crossed it when she agreed in 2008 to toss the results of a promotion exam for the New Haven, Conn., fire department

because an insufficient number of minorities passed it. That seems inherently unfair to those who succeeded—including the dyslexic firefighter Frank Ricci, who hired tutors to help him pass and whose name adorns the case. The lack of minority success does not necessarily signify the presence of racial prejudice. The best way to rectify such a situation is to make sure the next test is truer. An appropriate 21st century standard should be proof of actual discrimination against specific individuals.

The point is, there are civilized compromises to be made—not always, but often—on even the toughest social issues. We are beset by wars and economic distress, and we no longer have the luxury of ceding these discussions to demagogues and fundraising interest groups. It's time to move on.

**There are civilized compromises to be made—not always, but often—on even the toughest social issues**

B

# The 5 Big Health Care Dilemmas

**WHAT**

has to change to make health care more cost-efficient and effective?

**WHICH**

types of services will be covered?

# What shape health care reform takes will depend on how Congress, doctors, patients, insurers and others answer some sticky questions

BY KAREN TUMULTY



## WHY

is there resistance to a government-run plan?

## WHERE

will Congress find the money to fund an overhaul of the health-care system?

## HOW MANY

uninsured Americans will be covered when Congress is finished?

MAX BAUCUS, THE SENATE'S POINT MAN ON health care, sounds supremely confident when he talks about the odds that Congress will pass its most sweeping piece of social legislation since the New Deal. "Meaningful, comprehensive health-care legislation passes this year. That's a given," he declares, sipping a bottle of water in his functionally furnished hideaway office just steps from the Senate chamber. "It's gonna pass. It's gonna happen. There's no doubt about it."

The rest of us might be forgiven if we view Baucus' prediction with a little more skepticism. After all, universal health care is a cause that comes around every 15 or 20 years in Washington, and Presidents as far back as Woodrow Wilson have tried and failed to make it happen. The last big effort, in 1993 and 1994, was a political disaster that set Bill Clinton's presidency back a year or more.

And yet there are signals coming from Capitol Hill back rooms and corporate boardrooms that suggest things could be different this time. In recent weeks, health-care-industry leaders have pledged to cut their own costs by \$2 trillion over the next 10 years (though they have yet to fill in the specifics). The insurance industry now says it is willing to make concessions it never would have considered before—like agreeing to set prices on policies without regard to an individual's health history—in exchange for the access to the vast new market that would come with universal coverage. "Nobody here in our industry is defending or wants the status quo," says Karen Ignagni, who heads the leading insurance lobby group. Perhaps most important, there is more agreement than ever before that for any health-care system to work, everyone—or nearly everyone—has to be covered.

It is now possible to glimpse the outlines of a Grand Deal among insurers, providers, business, labor and patients that would put most of its focus on lowering costs and establish a foundation for expanding coverage in years to come.



The two key Senate committees expect to begin writing legislation this month, with the House also moving forward in coming weeks with what is expected to be a more liberal version. The Democrats' goal is for both chambers to pass their versions by the end of the summer, work out their differences in the fall and have a bill on Barack Obama's desk by the end of the year. "This window between now and the August recess, I think, is going to be the make-or-break period," the President said on June 2, before a meeting with Senate Democrats. "This is the time where we've got to get this running."

Obama, having studied the mistakes that Bill and Hillary Clinton made, has set broad goals but left it up to Congress to figure out how to reach them. "One measure of success is, Do we make the health-care system function better, more rationally, in a way that produces better outcomes and is less expensive?" says his chief political adviser, David Axelrod. "The point is the results."

But even amid signs of a new consensus, there are at least five questions that must be settled before there can be meaningful reform:

### 1. Will there be a big, new government system?

NO OTHER PROPOSAL HAS GENERATED AS much controversy as the idea of giving everyone the option of being covered by a government-run plan similar to Medicare. To its opponents—and some of its more ardent supporters—the public plan looks like the first step toward a single-payer system like Canada's or Britain's. "Too many people are reacting like Pavlov's dog," says Senator Chris Dodd, the ranking Democrat who has been filling in for the Health Committee for the ailing Ted Kennedy.

If it paid for health care the way the Medicare program does, a public plan could

charge premiums 30% lower than those of comparable private plans. And if it were open to all, about 131 million people—including two-thirds of those who now have private insurance—would take that deal, according to estimates by the Lewin Group, a nonpartisan research firm.

A public plan of this magnitude could be a powerful force to contain costs. But it could also destroy the private insurance industry, while doctors and hospitals say its lower fees would drive them out of business. Their combined opposition to this single issue could sink the chances of any health-reform bill's passing. What's more, many conservatives point out that the government can't afford the Medicare program it already has, so why create a new one?

Who will win this battle? For now, it appears that lawmakers will ultimately go for a watered-down version of a public plan—one, for instance, that would have to operate like a private insurance company, sustaining itself with the premiums it brings in and paying doctors and hospitals higher reimbursements than Medicare does. Or a public plan might be created only as a fallback if insurance companies fail to make coverage affordable and accessible.

### 2. How can a nation already deeply in debt afford health-care reform too?

THIS QUESTION HAS NOT GOTTEN NEARLY the amount of discussion that the public option has, but it's likely to be far more difficult to resolve. That's because under the budget rules, any plan that Congress passes will have to pay for itself within 11 years without adding to the deficit. Passing muster with government bean counters is not the same thing as writing sound health-care policy. While many health-care reform moves promise big savings in the future for the larger economy, they will require huge

up-front investments, with only a small part of the savings ever accruing to the Federal Government's bottom line.

So where will Congress find the money, especially for the government subsidies it would take to expand coverage to the 47 million or so Americans who now lack it? Lawmakers are reluctant to squeeze Medicare and Medicaid payments to hospitals and doctors much more than they already have. And while there's talk of new taxes on cigarettes and alcohol—even junk food and soda—they are not likely to bring in anything close to the \$1.5 trillion that outside experts say it could cost over the next decade to bring about universal coverage.

The targets of the moment are the health-care benefits that employers now give their workers tax-free—an income loophole that costs the U.S. nearly \$250 billion a year. "There's a lot of money there," says Massachusetts Institute of Technology economics professor Jonathan Gruber. "There's certainly enough there to get to universal coverage." Even taxing only those benefits that are more expensive and generous than average, he says, could raise \$360 billion to \$500 billion over 10 years.

Arithmetic aside, the idea of taxing employer-provided health insurance as income has plenty of merit. The current system is regressive, with three-quarters of the tax break going to those who are in the top half of the income-distribution scale. And because these more privileged Americans are not buying health care with after-tax income, they have less incentive to use it carefully.

Taxing benefits has already run into opposition from unions that have given up wage gains in favor of health benefits in recent rounds of negotiations. There is also the inconvenient fact that Obama attacked John McCain in last year's election for proposing exactly such a tax on something workers believe they get for free. Still,

## Who Will Decide? 14 players to watch



THE WHITE HOUSE

Nancy-Ann DeParle, the "health czar," and Budget Director Peter Orszag



THE LAWMAKERS

Montana Senator Max Baucus and California Representative Henry Waxman



THE INDUSTRY

Chip Kahn, a top hospital lobbyist, and Karen Ignagni, who represents the insurance industry



Baucus says, "Not all those benefits should be tax-free. The bulk should be tax-free, but not all of them. That's part of the solution."

### 3. Can we really cover everyone?

NO ISSUE DID MORE TO SINK THE CLINTON health-care plan than its imposition of an employer mandate—a requirement that companies provide health insurance to their workers. And there's little evidence it will be any easier to include one this time around. "It will be a job killer, because employers who cannot afford it will reduce payroll and not hire new workers," warns Bruce Josten of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. What business would prefer to see—and what Obama rejected during his presidential campaign—is an individual mandate requiring everyone who doesn't get health coverage at work to go out and buy it, just as car owners have to carry automobile insurance. But that means the Federal Government would have to subsidize people who couldn't afford it themselves, upping the health-care-reform price tag considerably. Obama says he can support an individual mandate only if it has a "hardship waiver to exempt Americans who cannot afford it," and he also says small businesses face a "number of special challenges in affording health benefits and should be exempted."

Without one mandate or the other, or a combination of the two, it will be impossible to get truly universal coverage. Some people—maybe a lot of them—are going to fall through the cracks. More pessimistic veterans of previous battles over health-care reform predict privately that even if a bill passes this year, more than half the nation's uninsured could remain that way.

### 4. What will be covered?

FOR UNIVERSAL COVERAGE TO HAVE ANY meaning, there will have to be a minimum set of guaranteed services. But what

## The problem with American health care, those who study the system will tell you, is not that we get too little but that we use too much

does that mean? Does it include preventive care? How about mental-health care? Abortion services? These are the kinds of decisions that will determine how expensive health-care reform will be for consumers, business and government. And what goes into the basic benefits package is a political minefield—which is why many health-care experts say they don't want it left in the hands of Congress and lobbyists. "If you start fighting over whether chiropractors should be in the benefits package, this bill is dead," says MIT's Gruber.

It might make sense for Congress to turn over that power to an independent agency, something along the lines of the Federal Health Board proposed by former Senate majority leader Tom Daschle, who had been Obama's choice for Health and Human Services Secretary until he withdrew his nomination amid a controversy over unpaid taxes. Conservatives charge that this would put Washington in the middle of decisions that are best left to doctors and patients. But would Americans really find a faraway government bureaucrat any more objectionable in that role than a faceless private insurance company that makes those decisions now? Either way, Congress is going to want to have a say in shaping the benefits package. What still needs to be resolved is how much congressional involvement it makes sense to have.

### 5. How will we bring down costs?

THE PROBLEM WITH AMERICAN HEALTH care, those who have studied the system will tell you, is not that we get too little care but that we use too much. By some estimates, as much as 30¢ of every health-care dollar is spent on medical treatment that is unnecessary, ineffective, duplicative or even harmful. Changing all that is going to require revamping health care from top to bottom, starting with the way health-care providers are reimbursed. While the current system pays them for the amount of care they provide, real reform would put more emphasis on the quality of that care and the outcomes it achieves.

If there is an ideal out there, Baucus says, it can be seen in the kind of medicine already being practiced by Kaiser Permanente, the Mayo Clinic, Intermountain Healthcare and Geisinger Health System, which manage to hold down costs and get better results. Their operations have fostered closer teamwork among care providers. Also important will be electronic record-keeping that saves time and avoids errors, and comparative-effectiveness research that gives doctors and patients a better sense of which treatments work best. And a reformed health-care system would put more emphasis on preventive care and managing such chronic conditions as asthma, heart disease and diabetes that now account for 75¢ out of every medical dollar spent. All these things would force a cultural and economic revolution on the health industry—and the patients who depend on it.

Can this country really afford to reform health care? What everyone seems to have concluded in the past five years is that we can't afford not to. When Washington punts on health care, it only becomes more difficult to fix the system the next time it tries. "The reason why we're going to pass it," Baucus says, "is we're not going to have this opportunity again."



#### THE DEALMAKER

Maine Senator Olympia Snowe, a moderate who might lend the effort bipartisan credibility



#### THE NUMBERS MEN

Congress's official scorekeeper, Doug Elmendorf, and MIT economist Jonathan Gruber



#### THE UNIONS

Service Employees International Union boss Andy Stern, labor's leading voice on reform



#### THE BOARDROOM

Wal-Mart's Lee Scott and U.S. Chamber of Commerce president Thomas Donahue



#### THE OPPOSITION

Oklahoma's Tom Coburn and Wisconsin's Paul Ryan, who have a GOP alternative

# The Final Countdown

As Iran prepares for a pivotal election, the U.S. is still having trouble containing the country's nuclear ambitions. Can Dennis Ross change that?

BY MASSIMO CALABRESI



IN LATE APRIL THE SWISS ambassador to Tehran arrived in Washington with a secret message for the small team in charge of Barack Obama's outreach to Iran. The rulers in Tehran were getting ready to release the American journalist Roxana Saberi, who had been charged with spying. But they wanted the U.S. to know that if she was freed, it would not be a concession; it would be a test. For more than two years, U.S. forces in Iraq had been holding three Iranian diplomats they believed were members of Iran's Revolutionary Guards Corps, linked to terrorist attacks in the region. Iran was not asking for the three men to be released in exchange for Saberi. But Tehran would be watching for the U.S. response.

The Swiss ambassador's message (Switzerland handles American interests in Iran, since Tehran and Washington do not have diplomatic relations) arrived at a delicate moment. Obama had personally launched a goodwill campaign to improve relations with Iran and restart negotiations over its nuclear program. But Iran was stalling on Obama's offer of nuclear talks, and now the U.S. team, led by veteran diplomat Dennis Ross, had to figure out where the Saberi gambit fit in. Her potential release could be a sign that moderates in Tehran were on the rise, in which case the U.S. should reciprocate. Or it could be a ploy by hard-liners in Tehran, who oppose détente with the West, to get the three Iranians released. In that case, the U.S. should stand pat. So which way to jump? The U.S. has never been good at making sense of Tehran's knotty power structure, and the distrust is mutual: many in Iran suspect that the U.S. is looking for an excuse to attack their nation, as it did Iraq.

In the effort to bridge the gap between two adversaries who do not understand



**Bombs away?**  
Iran's President  
Mahmoud  
Ahmadinejad tours  
a new nuclear-fuel  
facility in April





each other very well, Obama has turned to Ross, who was appointed special adviser for the gulf and southwest Asia by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Taciturn and relentless, he is tasked with orchestrating a global effort to lure Iran to the table and persuade it to curtail its nuclear program. So far, there's little sign of success. Which is why the U.S. is not just hoping that diplomacy will work; it is also laying the groundwork for what will happen if it fails. And failure to find a solution to the problem of Iran's nuclear ambitions could result in war.

In so high-stakes a game, Obama and Clinton have at least bought experience. Ross, 60, has been at the center of high-level U.S. diplomacy since the 1980s. Throughout Bill Clinton's presidency, he led U.S. efforts to secure peace between Israel and the Arabs. Ross helped shape Obama's position on Iran during the 2008 campaign, and as the President makes a goodwill trip through the region, much of the business he is conducting in Arab capitals is in furtherance of Ross's Iran plan.

The diplomat has his work cut out for him. Iran, which in 2003 was found to have established a large-scale uranium-enrichment program, badly wants to be a nuclear power, though it claims its ambitions are peaceful. And the clock is ticking: after Iran holds presidential elections on June 12 (with a second round, if needed, on June 19), the U.S. and Europe will again push for talks on the nuclear issue, senior Administration officials say. If Tehran's diplomats haven't shown a real willingness to respond by September, the U.S. and Europe will announce tough new sanctions. The urgency comes from the possibility that with its centrifuges spinning day and night, Iran could have enough low-enriched uranium to make the highly enriched fuel for a nuclear weapon, according to an American analysis of a Feb. 19 report by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Senior U.S. and European officials say that Israel, which views an Iranian nuclear weapon as an existential threat, has bluntly told the U.S., Germany and others, "If need be, we will have to act." That implies if all else fails, Israel would unilaterally attack Iran's nuclear facilities. The consequences of such an attack would be dire.

### The Long War

THERE IS NOTHING NEW ABOUT ENMITY between the U.S. and Iran; they have been in a sort of low-level war for 30 years. After the hostage crisis began in 1979, the U.S. seized Iranian assets and cut diplomatic relations. U.S. officials have alleged that Iran was behind the 1983 bombing



**At the center** Ross has been involved in high-level U.S. diplomacy since the 1980s, and during the Clinton presidency, he led efforts to secure peace between Israelis and Arabs

of the Marine barracks in Beirut. During the Iran-Iraq war of 1980-88, the U.S. tilted toward Iraq. Following the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, President George W. Bush lumped Iran with Iraq and North Korea in an "axis of evil," embraced a policy of regime change in Tehran and rebuffed Iran's offer of talks in 2003. By 2008, Tehran was on the way to building a nuclear weapon, which it saw as advancing its defense.

From outside government, Ross watched these developments with increasing alarm. He became convinced that Obama could change the context of the relationship with Iran. An Obama presidency, he thought, could transform the Iranian image of America and "make it easier to explain your policies and get more of a hearing" from Tehran, Ross told me last July. "Iran's almost reflexive suspicion of the U.S. would be removed. That's not insignificant."

Ross is not naive; he did not think a new President—and nothing more—would be enough to persuade Iran to give up its nuclear goals. So he and Obama put together a policy they called "bigger carrots, bigger sticks." Iran would get real benefits if it halted its pursuit of nuclear weapons and incur real costs if it did not.

The key, in Ross's view, is the state of Iran's economy. Though it sits on the world's third largest reserves of oil, Iran faces a growing economic crisis. The government is dependent on oil exports for 85% of its revenue, but Iran's aging production capacity is diminishing by about

500,000 bbl. per year, according to some analyses. What oil it can produce, it has little ability to refine, importing as much as 50% of its gasoline. In 2007, Iran imposed gas rationing, which set off riots.

Ross wanted to target that economic vulnerability. "If you're really going to concentrate the Iranian mind to what they stand to lose, they're going to have to see that the economic price goes up dramatically from where it is right now," he explained. But to make sanctions work, countries like Germany, China and Russia would have to join in an economic crackdown. To get those countries on board, Ross wrote last year, "there may be value in enlisting Israel to send a high-level delegation privately to European capitals to make the point that while others feel they can live with a nuclear Iran, Israel does not have that luxury." The implications of such a message would get anyone's attention.

### Working the Back Channels

AT FIRST, THE "BIGGER CARROTS, BIGGER STICKS" approach seemed to show promise. When, after eight years away, Ross returned to the State Department in early February, he quickly assembled a seven-person team and began working through a long list of moves. The first and still the most important came on March 20, when Obama gave a speech to Iranians on the holiday of Nowruz. The President made it clear that the U.S. would seek full normalization of relations with Iran, that it recognized Iran as an Islamic republic, that





**The old hand** Ross with Benjamin Netanyahu, then—as now—Israel's Prime Minister, in 1997. Israel sees Iran's nuclear ambitions as an existential threat

it would not pursue regime change there and that his Administration would talk about any issue Iran wanted to discuss, without conditions.

Ross then laid the carrots on thick, dispensing with the formal line that the U.S. doesn't talk to Iran. On the weekend of March 27, a U.S. diplomat discussed economic issues with his Iranian counterpart in Moscow. Days later, the U.S. special representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, Richard Holbrooke, met with Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammed Mehdi Akhundzadeh at an international conference in the Hague. At a Friends of Pakistan meeting in Tokyo, one of Holbrooke's diplomats met with his Iranian counterpart. And in a secret back-channel outreach in April, State Department staffers working for Ross got clearance from Tehran for a possible trip there this summer by a U.S. diplomat, according to a senior Administration official and a senior European diplomat.

As if all this striped-pants nicety were not enough, on April 8, the State Department announced it would join the Europeans, Russia and China in nuclear talks with Iran without condition—meaning that Iran could continue enriching uranium while all sides figured out how to start talking, a concession the U.S. had never made before. The U.S. also backed the package of Western incentives offered to Iran in July 2008—including economic, humanitarian and development aid—and formally invited the Iranians to talk.

For a while, it looked as if Iran was going to smile back. According to senior U.S.

and European diplomats, Saeed Jalili, Iran's representative at the nuclear talks, told Javier Solana, the European Union's foreign policy chief, that Iran would accept the invitation to talks. But then Jalili stalled, they say. By the end of the month, the U.S. and Europe concluded that Iran would not make a move before its presidential elections. Reflecting American distrust, the U.S. decided it would not reciprocate when Saberi was released on May 11; according to a senior Administration official, there has so far been no change in the status of the three Iranians held by American forces in Iraq, though the U.S. is considering releasing them to the Iraqis.

This tough line on the part of the U.S. should not be seen as a surprise. Ross's policy is straightforward; if bigger carrots don't work, try bigger sticks. If Tehran doesn't enter serious negotiations by September, the U.S. intends to unveil a raft of penalties. In return for U.S. participation in the nuclear talks, Ross got the Europeans

to help plan sanctions that would target Iranian businesses that have nothing to do with the nuclear program. The U.S. wants bans on insuring Iranian energy firms and any companies that do business with them. It also wants to stop credit guarantees for Iranian energy companies and those that work with them, and it wants to halt all investments in the energy sector. And Ross doesn't want to stop there. The U.S. has pushed Russia, a major trading partner of Iran's, to be ready to commit to sanctions on businesses unrelated to Iran's nuclear program—something Russia has resisted. In a secret letter in early February to Russian President Dmitri Medvedev, Obama wrote that the U.S. would abandon its plans for missile defense in Poland and the Czech Republic—which the U.S. has always justified by referring to an Iranian threat—if Russia would help bring Iran into compliance with its international nuclear obligations. Back home, Ross has persuaded Howard Berman, the top Democrat on the House Foreign Relations Committee, to flip positions and introduce a bill that would impose a ban on the sale of refined petroleum to Iran.

## Being Nice to Be Nasty

IT MAKES YOU WONDER, IS ROSS REALLY serious about dialogue with the mullahs? "He favors a pro forma attempt at negotiations with Iran, followed by far more severe sanctions or even military action if and when they fail," says Gary Sick, a former National Security Council staffer who is now a professor at Columbia University. The Iranians, too, seem to smell a trap, telling European diplomats that they fear that the U.S. is extending a hand to Iran only in an attempt to build a united coalition against them when talks fail. Indeed, on his May trip to the Persian Gulf, Ross carried a message for Iran's Arab neighbors, all of whom worry that Tehran will get nukes if Obama makes too nice. "Right now we're trying to make this work," a senior Administration official said, paraphrasing Ross's talking points. But, he continued, "by drawing everyone in, we're also setting a stage that creates a justification if this doesn't work, to do [pause] dramatically different things."

The U.S., Europe and Russia all insist Obama's offer of talks is genuine and remains on the table. Perhaps the presidential election in Iran will bring a significant change; perhaps Tehran will negotiate its nuclear program back into compliance with international treaties. But few of those involved in Iran policy expect such events to happen. Dennis Ross has spent the first months of the Obama Administration peeling carrots. Don't be surprised if you see him soon sharpening sticks. ■

**Ross 'favors a pro forma attempt at negotiations with Iran, followed by far more severe sanctions or even military action.'**

—GARY SICK, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



ev Poor man's sangria (red wine + 7up) is my new favorite drink (thx, @brajohn1)  
8:39 PM May 30th from web

**Evan Williams**

He helped launch Twitter in 2006 by asking "What are you doing?"



**SOCIETY**

# How Twitter Will Change The Way We Live

**(in 140 characters or less)**

Once just a fad, Twitter is developing into a powerful form of communication. What its growth says about us—and the future of American innovation

BY STEVEN JOHNSON

**Biz Stone**  
Co-founder  
sends tweets  
about Star Trek,  
basketball and  
his wife



biz was just in bed half dreaming that I was supposed to do something—oh yeah, wake up!  
6:48 AM May 30th from web

**T**HE ONE THING YOU CAN SAY FOR CERTAIN ABOUT Twitter is that it makes a terrible first impression. You hear about this new service that lets you send 140-character updates to your “followers,” and you think, Why does the world need this, exactly? It’s not as if we were all sitting around four years ago scratching our heads and saying, “If only there were a technology that would allow me to send a message to my 50 friends, alerting them in real time about my choice of breakfast cereal.”

I, too, was skeptical at first. I had met Evan Williams, Twitter’s co-creator, a couple of times in the dotcom ‘90s when he was launching Blogger.com. Back then, what people worried about was the threat that blogging posed to our attention span, with telegraphic, two-paragraph blog posts replacing long-format articles and books. With Twitter, Williams was launching a communications platform that limited you to a couple of sentences at most. What was next? Software that let you send a single punctuation mark to describe your mood?

And yet as millions of devotees have discovered, Twitter turns out to have unsuspected depth. In part this is because hearing about what your friends had for breakfast is actually more interesting than it sounds. The technology writer Clive Thompson calls this “ambient awareness”: by following these quick, abbreviated status reports from members of your extended social network, you get a strangely satisfying glimpse of their daily routines. We don’t think it at all moronic to start a phone call with a friend by asking how her day is going. Twitter gives you the same information without your even having to ask.

The social warmth of all those stray details shouldn’t be taken lightly. But I think there is something even more profound in what has happened to Twitter over the past two years, something that says more about the culture that has embraced and expanded Twitter at such extraordinary speed. Yes, the breakfast-status updates turned out to be more interesting than we thought. But the key development with Twitter is how we’ve jury-rigged the system to do things that its creators never dreamed of.

In short, the most fascinating thing about Twitter is not what it’s doing to us. It’s what we’re doing to it.

### The Open Conversation

EARLIER THIS YEAR I ATTENDED A DAYLONG CONFERENCE in Manhattan devoted to education reform. Called Hacking Education, it was a small, private affair: 40-odd educators, entrepreneurs, scholars, philanthropists and venture capitalists, all engaged in a sprawling six-hour conversation about the future of







**aplusk** I just realized that the song the "devil went down to Georgia" was created cause it's hotter than hell here

8:24 AM Jun 1st from web



**TheEllenShow** Kiwis have a lot of vitamin C. Just want ya'll to be healthy.

1:06 PM May 28th from web



**THE\_REAL\_SHAQ** shaglyte diet still in full effect. how u doin? lma b da #fittesttweeter lol

2:29 PM May 28th from web



**Oprah** Anybody got a surefire remedy for ticks? Just pulled 8 off of 1 dog. None of the prescribed vet meds seem to be working.

7:46 PM May 27th from web



**cnnbrk** France's President Sarkozy says most passengers on missing Air France jet are Brazilian, adding "they're all victims."

10:08 AM Jun 1st from web



**johncmayer** In a Silent Way - Miles Davis. Life is a beautiful thing. Pack a bag, make a playlist. Watch the world. Don't speak. Just listen.

1:08 AM May 30th from web



**mrskutcher** Just catching up on the Susan Boyle Info. Don't read gossip/trash stuff. I wonder why no 1 reported what was said 2 provoke such a reaction?

12:15 AM May 29th from web



**SenJohnMcCain** Obama has more czars than the Romanovs - who ruled Russia for 3 centuries. Romanovs 18, cyberczar makes 20.

12:12 PM May 30th from web



**TheOnion** Archaeologists Discover World's First Guy Named Marty <http://u.mavrev.com/6vkl>

8:37 AM Jun 1st from web



**SarahKSilverman** I just ate a fancy schmancy dinner of deconstructed olives and liquified cheeses and all my stomach kept thinking was, "This is not cereal."

8:59 AM May 28th from web



**GStephanopoulos** Just spoke with tearful Rep Jose Serrano, Like Sotomayor grew up in Bronx projects. For Latinos, this pick has force of Thurgood Marshall

9:31 AM May 26th from web

schools. Twenty years ago, the ideas exchanged in that conversation would have been confined to the minds of the participants. Ten years ago, a transcript might have been published weeks or months later on the Web. Five years ago, a handful of participants might have blogged about their experiences after the fact.

But this event was happening in 2009, so trailing behind the real-time, real-world conversation was an equally real-time conversation on Twitter. At the outset of the conference, our hosts announced that anyone who wanted to post live commentary about the event via Twitter should include the word *#hackedu* in his 140 characters. In the room, a large display screen showed a running feed of tweets. Then we all started talking, and as we did, a shadow conversation unfolded on the screen: summaries of someone's argument, the occasional joke, suggested links for further reading. At one point, a brief argument flared up between two participants in the room—a tense back-and-forth that transpired silently on the screen as the rest of us conversed in friendly tones.

At first, all these tweets came from inside the room and were created exclusively by conference participants tapping away on their laptops or BlackBerrys. But within half an hour or so, word began to seep out into the Twittersphere that an interesting conversation about the future of schools was happening at *#hackedu*. A few tweets appeared on the screen from strangers announcing that they were following the *#hackedu* thread. Then others joined the conversation, adding their observations or proposing topics for further exploration. A few experts grumbled publicly about how they hadn't been invited to the conference. Back in the room, we pulled interesting ideas and questions from the screen and integrated them into our face-to-face conversation.

When the conference wrapped up at the end of the day, there was a public record of hundreds of tweets documenting the conversation. And the conversation continued—if you search Twitter for *#hackedu*, you'll find dozens of new comments posted over the past few weeks, even though the conference happened in early March.

Injecting Twitter into that conversation fundamentally changed the rules of engagement. It added a second layer of discussion and brought a wider audience into what would have been a private exchange. And it gave the event an afterlife on the Web. Yes, it was built entirely out of 140-character messages, but the sum total of those tweets added up to something truly substantive, like a suspension bridge made of pebbles.

## The Super-Fresh Web

THE BASIC MECHANICS OF TWITTER ARE REMARKABLY SIMPLE. Users publish tweets—those 140-character messages—from a computer or mobile device. (The character limit allows tweets to be created and circulated via the SMS platform used by most mobile phones.) As a social network, Twitter revolves around the principle of followers. When you choose to follow another Twitter user, that user's tweets appear in reverse chronological order on your main Twitter page. If you follow 20 people, you'll see a mix of tweets scrolling down the page: breakfast-cereal updates, interesting new links, music recommendations, even musings on the future of education. Some celebrity Twitterers—most famously Ashton Kutcher—have crossed the million-follower mark, effectively giving them a broadcast-size audience. The average Twitter profile seems to be somewhere in the dozens: a collage



of friends, colleagues and a handful of celebrities. The mix creates a media experience quite unlike anything that has come before it, strangely intimate and at the same time celebrity-obsessed. You glance at your Twitter feed over that first cup of coffee, and in a few seconds you find out that your nephew got into med school and Shaquille O'Neal just finished a cardio workout in Phoenix.

In the past month, Twitter has added a search box that gives you a real-time view onto the chatter of just about any topic imaginable. You can see conversations people are having about a presidential debate or the *American Idol* finale or Tiger Woods—or a conference in New York City on education reform. For as long as we've had the Internet in our homes, critics have bemoaned the demise of shared national experiences, like moon landings and "Who Shot J.R." cliff hangers—the folkloric American living room, all of us signing off in unison with Walter Cronkite, shattered into a million isolation booths. But watch a live mass-media event with Twitter open on your laptop and you'll see that the futurists had it wrong. We still have national events, but now when we have them, we're actually having a genuine, public conversation with a group that extends far beyond our nuclear family and our next-door neighbors. Some of that conversation is juvenile, of course, just as it was in our living room when we heckled Richard Nixon's Checkers speech. But some of it is moving, witty, observant, subversive.

Skeptics might wonder just how much subversion and wit is conveyable via 140-character updates. But in recent months Twitter users have begun to find a route around that limitation by employing Twitter as a pointing device instead of a communications channel: sharing links to longer articles, discussions, posts, videos—anything that lives behind a URL. Websites that once saw their traffic dominated by Google search queries are seeing a growing number of new visitors coming from "passed links" at social networks like Twitter and Facebook. This is what the naysayers fail to understand: it's just as easy to use Twitter to spread the word about a brilliant 10,000-word *New Yorker* article as it is to spread the word about your Lucky Charms habit.

Put those three elements together—social networks, live searching and link sharing—and you have a cocktail that poses what may amount to the most interesting alternative to Google's near monopoly in searching. At its heart, Google's system is built around the slow, anonymous accumulation of authority: pages rise to the top of Google's search results according to, in part, how many links point to them, which tends to favor older pages that have had time to build an audience. That's a fantastic solution for finding high-quality needles in the immense, spam-plagued haystack that is the contemporary Web. But it's not a particularly useful solution for finding out what people are saying *right now*, the in-the-moment conversation that industry pioneer John Battelle calls the "super fresh" Web. Even in its toddlerhood, Twitter is a more efficient supplier of the super-fresh Web than Google. If you're looking for interesting articles or sites devoted to Kobe Bryant, you search Google. If you're looking for interesting comments from your extended social network about the three-pointer Kobe just made 30 seconds ago, you go to Twitter.

## From Toasters to Microwaves

BECAUSE TWITTER'S CO-FOUNDERS—EVAN WILLIAMS, BIZ STONE and Jack Dorsey—are such a central-casting vision of start-up savvy (they're quotable and charming and have the



**lancearmstrong** Already at the airport in Rome. Headed home! Baby # 4 any minute now. CaNOT wait!

11:49 AM May 31st from web



**SuzeOrmanShow** I am sitting here watching all about GM BK... okay now— as if they did not know this was going to happen billions of dollars ago— such a shame

8:51 AM Jun 1st from web



**jack\_welch** Discussions on Sotomayer on morning talk shows repetitive and boring. She is qualified and will be seated! Lot of hot air will be expended

10:45 AM May 31st from web



**nprpolitics** How everyone loves to play politics in advance of the Sotomayor confirmation hearings: [@kenrudin](http://tinyurl.com/lqbejh)

12:04 PM Jun 1st from web



**davidgregory** Dodgers beat the Cubs. Solid gold.

8:19 PM May 31st from web



**AKGovSarahPalin** Basketball camp starts tomorrow so Todd has kids packing hoop gear as I fly to Juneau. Look forward to upcoming wk incl Michael Reagan visit

7:21 PM May 31st from web



**tonyhawk** there is a port-a-potty off the 96th Ave exit on E-470. There is a signed deck in there. Don't worry, it's dry. sorry about the toll-road

6:37 PM May 30th from web



**drdrew** "No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man." Heraclitus Think on it...

1:14 AM May 31st from web



**MarthaStewart** of course I have an iPhone, a Kindle, a g10 etc I love new technology but await convergence

5:48 PM May 27th from web



**BarackObama** The White House just joined Twitter. Follow @whitehouse to get updates on the H1N1 flu and other top issues.

3:37 PM May 1st from web



**TheCaneZone** Status: Whiter than the finish landscape in the winter... Need a tan.

5:27 AM Apr 22nd from web

extra glamour of using a loft in San Francisco's SoMa district as a headquarters instead of a bland office park in Silicon Valley) much of the media interest in Twitter has focused on the company. Will Ev and Biz sell to Google early or play long ball? (They have already turned down a reported \$500 million from Facebook.) It's an interesting question but not exactly a new plotline. Focusing on it makes you lose sight of the much more significant point about the Twitter platform: the fact that many of its core features and applications have been developed by people who are not on the Twitter payroll.

This is not just a matter of people finding a new use for a tool designed to do something else. In Twitter's case, the users have been redesigning the tool itself. The convention of grouping a topic or event by the "hashtag"—#hackedu or #inauguration—was spontaneously invented by the Twitter user base (as was the convention of replying to another user with the @ symbol). The ability to search a live stream of tweets was developed by another start-up altogether, Summize, which Twitter purchased last year. (Full disclosure: I am an adviser to one of the minority investors in Summize.) Thanks to these innovations, following a live feed of tweets about an event—political debates or *Lost* episodes—has become a central part of the Twitter experience. But just 12 months ago, that mode of interaction would have been technically impossible using Twitter. It's like inventing a toaster oven and then looking around a year later and seeing that your customers have of their own accord figured out a way to turn it into a microwave.

One of the most telling facts about the Twitter platform is that the vast majority of its users interact with the service via software created by third parties. There are dozens of iPhone and BlackBerry applications—all created by enterprising amateur coders or small start-ups—that let you manage Twitter feeds. There are services that help you upload photos and link to them from your tweets, and programs that map other Twitizens who are near you geographically. Ironically, the tools you're offered if you visit Twitter.com have changed very little in the past two years. But there's an entire Home Depot of Twitter tools available everywhere else.

As the tools have multiplied, we're discovering extraordinary new things to do with them. Last month an anticommunist uprising in Moldova was organized via Twitter. Twitter has become so widely used among political activists in China that the government recently blocked access to it, in an attempt to censor discussion of the 20th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre. A service called SickCity scans the Twitter feeds from multiple urban areas, tracking references to flu and fever. Celebrity Twitizens like Kutcher have directed their vast followings toward charitable causes (in Kutcher's case, the Malaria No More organization).

Social networks are notoriously vulnerable to the fickle tastes of teens and 20-somethings (remember Friendster?), so it's entirely possible that three or four years from now, we'll have moved on to some Twitter successor. But the key elements of the Twitter platform—the follower structure, link sharing, real-time searching—will persevere regardless of Twitter's fortunes, just as Web conventions like links, posts and feeds have endured over the past decade. In fact, every major channel of information will be Twitterified in one way or another in the coming years:

**NEWS AND OPINION.** Increasingly, the stories that come across our radar—news about a plane crash, a feisty Op-Ed, a gossip item—will arrive via the passed links of the people we follow. Instead of being built by some kind of artificially intelligent software algorithm, a customized newspaper will be compiled from all the articles being read that morning by your social network. This will lead to more news diversity and polarization at

the same time: your networked front page will be more eclectic than any traditional newspaper front page, but political partisans looking to enhance their own private echo chamber will be able to tune out opposing viewpoints more easily.

**SEARCHING.** As the archive of links shared by Twitter users grows, the value of searching for information via your extended social network will start to rival Google's approach to the search. If you're looking for information on Benjamin Franklin, an essay shared by one of your favorite historians might well be more valuable than the top result on Google; if you're looking for advice on sibling rivalry, an article recommended by a friend of a friend might well be the best place to start.

**ADVERTISING.** Today the language of advertising is dominated by the notion of impressions: how many times an advertiser can get its brand in front of a potential customer's eyeballs, whether on a billboard, a Web page or a NASCAR hood. But impressions are fleeting things, especially compared with the enduring relationships of followers. Successful businesses will have millions of Twitter followers (and will pay good money to attract them), and a whole new language of tweet-based customer interaction will evolve to keep those followers engaged: early access to new products or deals, live customer service, customer involvement in brainstorming for new products.

Not all these developments will be entirely positive. Most of us have learned firsthand how addictive the micro-events of our personal e-mail inbox can be. But with the ambient awareness of status updates from Twitter and Facebook, an entire new empire of distraction has opened up. It used to be that you compulsively checked your BlackBerry to see if anything new had happened in your personal life or career: e-mail from the boss, a reply from last night's date. Now you're compulsively checking your BlackBerry for news from

### What Are You Doing?

Although Twitter trails other Web giants, its explosive growth over the past year means it could soon catch up

	April '08 Visitors (in millions)	April '09 Visitors (in millions)	Change
Google	120.79	131.60	9%
facebook	22.48	71.29	217%
amazon.com	47.26	50.37	7%
myspace.com	58.75	54.60	-7%
twitter	1.22	17.10	1,298%

Source: Nielsen



stevenjohnson To follow the Twitter discussion for this story, search Twitter for #timetwitter

other people's lives. And because, on Twitter at least, some of those people happen to be celebrities, the Twitter platform is likely to expand that strangely delusional relationship that we have to fame. When Oprah tweets a question about getting ticks off her dog, as she did recently, anyone can send an @ reply to her, and in that exchange, there is the semblance of a normal, everyday conversation between equals. But of course, Oprah has more than a million followers, and that isolated query probably elicited thousands of responses. Who knows what small fraction of her @ replies she has time to read? But from the fan's perspective, it feels refreshingly intimate: "As I was explaining to Oprah last night, when she asked about dog ticks..."

### End-User Innovation

THE RAPID-FIRE INNOVATION WE'RE SEEING AROUND TWITTER IS not new, of course. Facebook, whose audience is still several times as large as Twitter's, went from being a way to scope out the most attractive college freshmen to the Social Operating System of the Internet, supporting a vast ecosystem of new applications created by major media companies, individual hackers, game creators, political groups and charities. The Apple iPhone's long-term competitive advantage may well prove to be the more than 15,000 new applications that have been developed for the device, expanding its functionality in countless ingenious ways.

The history of the Web followed a similar pattern. A platform originally designed to help scholars share academic documents, it now lets you watch television shows, play poker with strangers around the world, publish your own newspaper, rediscover your high school girlfriend—and, yes, tell the world what you had for breakfast. Twitter serves as the best poster child for this new model of social creativity in part because these innovations have flourished at such breathtaking speed and in part because the platform is so simple. It's as if Twitter's creators dared us to do something interesting by giving us a platform with such draconian restrictions. And sure enough, we accepted the dare with relish. Just 140 characters? I wonder if I could use that to start a political uprising.

The speed with which users have extended Twitter's platform points to a larger truth about modern innovation. When we talk about innovation and global competitiveness, we tend to fall back on the easy metric of patents and Ph.D.s. It turns out the U.S. share of both has been in steady decline since peaking in the early '70s. (In 1970, more than 50% of the world's graduate degrees in science and engineering were issued by U.S. universities.) Since the mid-'80s, a long progression of doomsayers have warned that our declining market share in the patents-and-Ph.D.s business augurs dark times for American innovation. The specific threats have changed. It was the Japanese who would destroy us in the '80s; now it's China and India.

But what actually happened to American innovation during that period? We came up with America Online, Netscape, Amazon, Google, Blogger, Wikipedia, Craigslist, TiVo, Netflix, eBay, the iPod and iPhone, Xbox, Facebook and Twitter itself. Sure, we didn't build the Prius or the Wii, but if you measure global innovation in terms of actual lifestyle-changing hit products and not just grad students, the U.S. has been lapping the field for the past 20 years.

How could the forecasts have been so wrong? The answer is that we've been tracking only part of the innovation story. If I go to grad school and invent a better mousetrap, I've created value, which I can protect with a patent and capitalize on by selling my invention to consumers. But if someone else figures out a way to use my mousetrap to replace his much more expensive washing machine, he's created value as well. We tend to put the emphasis on the first kind of value creation because there are a

small number of inventors who earn giant paydays from their mousetraps and thus become celebrities. But there are hundreds of millions of consumers and small businesses that find value in these innovations by figuring out new ways to put them to use.

There are several varieties of this kind of innovation, and they go by different technical names. MIT professor Eric von Hippel calls one "end-user innovation," in which consumers actively modify a product to adapt it to their needs. In its short life, Twitter has been a hothouse of end-user innovation: the hashtag; searching; its 11,000 third-party applications; all those creative new uses of Twitter—some of them banal, some of them spam and some of

them sublime. Think about the community invention of the @ reply. It took a service that was essentially a series of isolated microbroadcasts, each individual tweet an island, and turned Twitter into a truly conversational medium. All of these adoptions create new kinds of value in the wider economy, and none of them actually originated at Twitter HQ. You don't need patents or Ph.D.s to build on this kind of platform.

This is what I ultimately find most inspiring about the Twitter phenomenon. We are living through the worst economic crisis in generations, with apocalyptic headlines threatening the end of capitalism as we know it, and yet in the middle of this chaos, the engineers at Twitter headquarters are scrambling to keep the servers up, application developers are releasing their latest builds, and ordinary users are figuring out all the ingenious ways to put these tools to use. There's a kind of resilience here that is worth savoring. The weather reports keep announcing that the sky is falling, but here we are—millions of us—sitting around trying to invent new ways to talk to one another. ■

*Johnson is the author of six books, most recently The Invention of Air, and a co-founder of the local-news website outside.in*



# The Plot to Take On The iPhone

Palm, the company that helped create the smart-phone market, is trying to get back in via the Pre—designed by a former Apple star. There's plenty of intrigue, but can anything really compete with the iPhone?

BY JOSH QUITNER/SUNNYVALE

**A** FEW WEEKS AGO, JON RUBINSTEIN was booking up the side of Mount Tamalpais in Northern California while I wheezed like a steam engine in his wake. This was irritating on two levels: 1) I do this hike all the time, and 2) he had already gone for a long run earlier in the day.

The executive chairman of Palm Inc., Rubinstein, a wiry 52, is a marathoner. So I persevered. I was trying to find out the answer to a question that's riveting the tech world these days: namely, Will the Pre save Palm? An iconic Silicon Valley company that pretty much launched—then lost—the smart-phone category, Palm has been teetering on the brink of irrelevance. But now it's fighting back with the Pre, the much hyped smart phone that Rubinstein & Co. have been working on for two years; it launched June 6 (\$199 at Sprint stores in the U.S.) with all the expectations of a summer-movie blockbuster.

You probably know that smart phones—cell phones as versatile as desktop computers and connected to the Internet—have been around for more than a decade. But thanks to the iPhone, the category has suddenly become white hot.

Putting a Net-connected computer in everyone's pocket is expected to be a sensationally lucrative business. The planet pululates with some 4 billion mobile phones, after all, and Palm says only about 10% of them are smart phones. During the next few years, that number may reach 50%. Morgan Stanley Research even described the migration to Internet-connected mobile devices as "one of the biggest opportunities in the history of the technology industry."

And that's where Rubinstein, a former Apple hardware engineer who oversaw the iPod division, comes in. His job is to restore Palm to its former glory and carve out a nice slice of the smart-phone pie. But to do so, Palm will have to compete with Apple's iPhone. Launched two years ago, the iPhone has created nothing less than a new way of doing business. By last January, more than 21 million iPhones had been sold; nearly 50,000 applications are now available for download at its online App Store. Rubinstein, an easygoing guy, smiles when we discuss this and points out that the market is large and expanding; Palm doesn't need to steal any of its competitors' customers to thrive. The smart-phone race is a marathon, not a sprint. "We're only at the beginning of the journey," he says. By that measure, the Pre represents the first couple of miles.

Yet if the Pre stumbles, Palm might never catch up. The industry sets a blistering pace, and Palm is already late to market. But if anything worries the famously secretive Apple (which, it goes almost without saying, declined to comment for this story), it has to be Rubinstein. He wasn't merely once an Apple insider; he was in the inner circle, a man close to Steve Jobs himself who helped overhaul the engineering processes core to Apple's turnaround. He worked on the top projects at i Infinite Loop and, for a time at least, got to see where Apple was headed. He's the guy best equipped to take Palm there too.

## Another Bite at the Apple

RUBINSTEIN IS A 30-YEAR TECHNOLOGY veteran who has worked at Hewlett-Packard and a variety of start-ups, in-







**Rubinstein told Jobs he wanted out. 'He goes, "Really?"' Rubinstein thunders, imitating a man in shock. Then he chuckles**

*Palm CEO Ed Colligan, above right, lured Apple guru Jon Rubinstein out of retirement to orchestrate Palm's comeback*

cluding the legendary and doomed NeXT Computer, where he was wooed by Jobs. He arrived at Apple in 1997, about the time Jobs returned from exile and, as one of Jobs' trusted lieutenants, ran the hardware side of the company. The candy-colored gumdrop iMac he built helped haul Apple back from the brink. When Jobs decided that Apple should make a digital-music player, it was Rubinstein who discovered a tiny hard drive at Toshiba's research labs that would be the soul of the new machine: the iPod.

Then he burned out. Like others on the executive team, he had made a small fortune in Apple stock—\$26 million by some accounts—and he didn't need to work anymore. What he wanted to do, he told Jobs at a meeting in the boss's office one September day in 2005, was build a house on the beach in Mexico, drink margaritas with his wife and toast the setting sun. Rubinstein told Jobs he wanted out. "He goes, 'Really?'" Rubinstein thunders, imitating a man in shock. Then he chuckles.

The meeting wasn't acrimonious, and he believed the door was open should he ever want to return. Jobs did not beg him to stay, and they worked out a plan for an orderly transition. Rubinstein went south and built his house, inventing a clever fire-fighting system that pumps water from the swimming pool (the closest fire department is 35 minutes away).

One day, "out of the blue," he says, he got a call from Fred Anderson, who had been Apple's CFO until retiring in 2004. It was Anderson who helped Apple figure out how to buy enough time to execute the turnaround. Anderson had had a terrible falling out with Jobs during the Securities

and Exchange Commission's investigation of an options-backdating scandal in 2007. He settled the case without admitting wrongdoing but blamed the CEO for leaving him exposed. Not coincidentally, at about that time, Anderson joined Elevation Partners, a private equity firm that had invested \$325 million to buy a 26% share of Palm. (It now owns 34%.) Thinking that Rubinstein was just what Palm needed to right itself, Anderson introduced him to Ed Colligan, Palm's CEO. Colligan visited Rubinstein in Mexico and ultimately convinced him that Palm needed him to orchestrate a Jobs-style reinvention.

## Seeing the Future in Palm

AS HE DUG DEEPER, RUBINSTEIN SAW A pattern that intrigued him. Palm's first hit was the Pilot, which pretty much created the personal digital assistant (PDA). It enabled people to organize all their stuff on a computer, then sync it to the device. HandSpring, Palm's successor in a convoluted corporate history, merged the PDA with a cell phone, but to Rubinstein it was sync that stuck out: "We looked at Palm's DNA and said, 'What made it great?' Syncing—from Day One, Palm has been about syncing." But these days, people don't want to be tethered to a computer, he says. "People keep their data all over the place. It's no longer spread all over their computer. It's spread throughout the cloud!"

Ah, the cloud, those enormous storage lockers of the Net that serve data—e-mail, pictures, video and your Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter pals—wherever you are. The problem is that all these data streams are increasingly hard to manage. I have one contact list of my friends and family on my iPhone; I can also switch to a directory of work associates. But then I've got a third list of friends at Facebook and yet another on LinkedIn. The promise of the Pre's WebOS is that it can take all those feeds and wirelessly combine them into one comprehensive contact list, without duplicates. On the Pre, this is known as Synergy, and it already works with contacts, e-mail, calendars and instant messages.

When I add a new friend on Facebook, for instance, a few moments later, he appears as a contact on my Pre. If he is already there, WebOS is smart enough to just add anything that is missing—his birthday, say—to the existing contact.

Mashing up all those feeds in one place could be confusing. But the Pre handles it intelligently via something it calls Universal Search. The Pre is a slide phone—a touchscreen on its face gives way to a keyboard below. Simply start typing, and WebOS pulls up a pane that searches your contacts and also gives you the option to

# Smart-Phone Smackdown!

## Palm's Pre vs. Apple's iPhone



### CONTENDER

Palm says its new Pre is the first phone built to simulate the Web itself

### PROS

#### Cool interface

Apps look like cards, and you can run a dozen at a time

#### Handles data better

Cleverly mashes up Facebook, Gmail and Exchange contacts and calendars

#### Keyboard and touch

Just start typing on the slider keyboard to find anything

### CHAMPION

Apple's iPhone, linked to an App Store with 50,000 programs, was the game changer in the race to build a better smart phone

### CONS

#### Still needs work

As with any new cutting-edge gadget, expect bugs for some months to come

#### Few apps

A little more than a dozen programs are available at launch

#### No good games

It will be years before the Pre can compete as a game console



### PROS

#### Looks great

You can't find a smarter-looking smart phone

#### Works great

It's as smart on the inside as on the outside. Stable too

#### Keeps growing

There's an app for just about anything you can imagine

### CONS

#### E-mail is a mess

A fix is in the works, but so far you can't search messages

#### Needs a keyboard

Some people are error-prone on touchscreens

#### No multitasking

You can launch only one app at a time, which is frustrating

search via Google, Wikipedia or Twitter. You can type, "How fast does a zebra run," hit a Google button and get the answer. Pretty sweet.

The bigger idea here is that WebOS is designed to simulate the Web itself. In fact, anyone who can build a website can write applications for this platform, which is why Rubinstein expects a flood of Pre apps shortly. "The user environment in WebOS is a website," Rubinstein says. That's a powerful hook, especially if you believe that the Web will continue to grow relentlessly.

Finally, the user interface is especially cool and does something I've never before seen on a smart phone: it can run a dozen applications simultaneously. Each app is represented by a virtual card after it launches; switching between programs is as easy as leafing through the cards. To close an app, you simply flick it away.

The Pre does have issues. I've used two for the past few weeks and run into a couple of early glitches. One was an operating system bug that caused my first Pre to crash. Fixed, says the company. The other was a hardware issue that drained my battery in five hours. Palm says that's an anomaly but is investigating. The other things I disliked are pretty minor and easily corrected. Cut and paste is very limited and clumsy to use; there are only a dozen applications available at launch, and your IT guys can't remotely wipe it if it's lost. Still, I complained bitterly about the same things with the first iPhone in 2007, and now I embrace it with the zeal of a convert. Could that happen with Pre? Maybe.

Apple is taking a "Pre who?" approach so far. But it's doubtless ticked off that the Pre cheekily syncs with Apple's proprietary iTunes software. (Rubinstein claims he's doing Apple a favor by making it easier for Pre owners to buy music from the iTunes store.) Needless to say, Apple is hardly standing still. New iPhones are rumored—perhaps they'll be unveiled at an Apple developers' conference on June 8—and its operating system will get an upgrade.

Still, Rubinstein has managed to keep Palm in the race. The Pre ought to find new converts, but it is Palm's WebOS that's the key to success. Rubinstein told me that Palm is working on an array of mobile Internet devices, all powered by WebOS, which he argues—persuasively—is built to last a decade or more.

While I'm not giving up my iPhone yet, the Pre is certainly the first sexy alternative. Palm stock has surged, from \$1.42 a share in December to about \$13 last week. And the more I hear sources at Apple dissing the WebOS as not being all that revolutionary, the more I suspect this could turn into a marathon after all. ■

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\*Research conducted by Cornell University  
Judith L. Capper, Eurdice Castaneda-Gutierrez, Roger A. Cady, and Dale E. Bauman, Journal of Animal Science, March 2009)





RELIGION

## Decoding God's Changing Moods

The ancient Scriptures of Judaism, Christianity and Islam reveal a pattern—and if we read it correctly, there may be hope for reconciliation and religious harmony

BY ROBERT WRIGHT

THE ANCIENT ISRAELITES GOT STRAIGHTFORWARD guidance from Scripture on how to handle people who didn't worship Israel's god, Yahweh. "You shall annihilate them—the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites—just as the Lord your God has commanded."

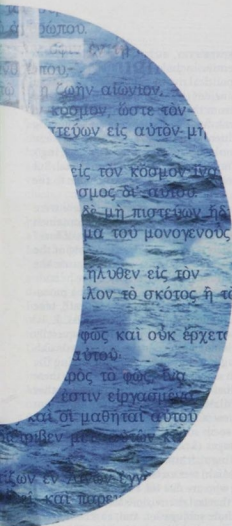
The point of this exercise, explained the Book of Deuteronomy, was to make sure the "abhorrent" religions of nearby peoples didn't rub off on Israelites.

Yet sometimes the Israelites were happy to live in peace with neighbors who worshipped alien gods. In the Book of Judges, an Israelite military leader proposes a live-and-let-live arrangement with the Ammonites: "Should you not possess what your god Chemosh gives you to possess? And should we not be the ones to possess everything that our god Yahweh has conquered for our benefit?"

The Bible isn't the only Scripture with such vacillations between belligerence and tolerance. Muslims, who like Christians and Jews worship the God who revealed himself to Abraham, are counseled in one part of the Koran to "kill the polytheists wherever you find them." But another part prescribes a different stance toward unbeliev-

Illustration for TIME by John Ritter





ers, "To you be your religion; to me my religion."

You'd think the Abrahamic God would make up his mind—Can he live with other gods or not? What's with the random mood fluctuations?

But the fluctuations aren't really random. If you juxtapose the Abrahamic Scriptures with what scholars have learned about the circumstances surrounding their creation, a pattern appears. Certain kinds of situations inspired tolerance, and other kinds inspired the opposite. You might even say this pattern is a kind of code, a code that is hidden in the Scriptures and that, once revealed, unlocks the secret of God's changing moods.

And maybe this code could unlock more than that. Maybe knowing what circumstances made the authors of Scripture open-minded can help make modern-day believers open-minded. Maybe the hidden code in the Bible and the Koran, the code that links Scriptural content to context, could even help mend the most dangerous of intra-Abrahamic fault lines, the one between Muslims and Jews.

The first step in seeing this code is to look to the world that gave us the Hebrew Bible (what Christians call the Old Testament) and the Koran—the world that embedded the code in them. There we'll

see how consequential God's mood changes could be—how, indeed, a burst of vengeful intolerance helped give us monotheism itself; we'll see that the birth of monotheism left us with what you might call a bad God.

But we'll also see that this God then had bursts of moral growth—within both Judaism and Islam—and that the proven ingredients of that growth are around today, just when another such burst is needed.

In the beginning—or near the beginning—was King Solomon. Israel's third King, he reigned in the 10th century B.C.E. (before the common era). In addition to being famously wise, he was flagrantly polytheistic. The Bible handles this awkward fact by blaming it on his many wives of foreign extraction, who "turned away his heart after other gods."

The Bible has the logic backward. In ancient times, when a man of royal blood married a foreign woman of royal blood, it wasn't on a romantic whim. It was part of foreign policy, a way to cement relations with another nation. And that cement was strengthened by paying respect to the nation's gods. Solomon's many wives didn't lead to his many gods; his politics led to both the wives and the gods.

Solomon believed Israel could benefit—economically and otherwise—by staying on good terms with nearby nations. As game theorists say, he saw relations with other nations as non-zero-sum; the fortunes of Israel and other nations were positively correlated, so outcomes could be win-win or lose-lose. His warmth toward those religions was a way of making the win-win outcome more likely.

Again and again in the Bible, this perception of non-zero-sumness underlies religious tolerance. This doesn't mean religious tolerance is always consciously calculated. The human mind does lots of subterranean work to pave the way for social success. But whether the calculation is conscious or not, people are more open to the religious beliefs of other people if they sense a non-zero-sum dynamic.

The flip side is that perceptions of a zero-sum dynamic—of a game in which one side will win and one side lose—can foster intolerance of other religions and their gods. Indeed, a close look at the Bible shows how this worldview helped move Israel from the polytheism of Solomon's time toward monotheism—a monotheism that (contrary to the standard story of Christians and Jews) doesn't seem to have taken root until the middle of the first millennium B.C.E.

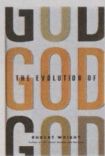
Paving the way for this eventual triumph of monotheism was a series of prophets who cried out for exclusive devotion to Yahweh, railing against the polytheistic ways of Israel. These prophets aren't necessarily monotheists; they don't deny the existence of gods other than Yahweh. They seem to be what scholars call monolatrists, insisting that Israelites worship only one God.

Among the earliest of these prophets is Hosea, who is thought to have written in the 8th century B.C.E. Rejecting a Solomonic view—that immersion in the larger world could make Israel richer—Hosea insists the game is zero-sum: when Israel “mixes himself with the peoples... foreigners devour his strength.” Hosea's suspicion of the foreign isn't surprising. Israel, a small nation in a tough neighborhood, often did get pushed around.

The monolatrous prophets gained a following, but they had trouble winning consistent support from Israel's leaders. So in the early part of the 7th century B.C.E., decades after Hosea issued his sermons, Israel was still awash in religious pluralism. The Jerusalem Temple itself, according to the Bible, was home not just to Yahweh but also to Asherah, a goddess who, scholars increasingly believe, was Yahweh's consort. And there were “vessels made for Baal,” the Canaanite God.

Then, in 640 B.C.E. came an intense Israelite King named Josiah who would lend brutal support to the monolatrist cause and push Israel closer to monotheism. He took the figure of Asherah out of the Temple and “beat it to dust.” The vessels for Baal didn't fare well either.

Was Josiah, too, driven by a zero-sum worldview in which the worshippers of gods other than Yahweh looked like enemies?



*This essay is based on Wright's **The Evolution of God**, published by Little, Brown and Company, which comes out June 8*

**A**PPARENTLY, BUT IN HIS CASE THE ENEMIES included Israelites—domestic political rivals—not just foreigners. In ancient times, political power flowed from the divine. Prophets who could claim to speak for a god with a large following thus had influence. If that god was Yahweh, these prophets would be concentrated in the King's court, since Yahweh was Israel's national God. But prophets of other gods were less amenable to the King's control and so a threat to his power.

And so long as polytheism reigned, there were lots of those prophets. At one point, Israel contained “400 prophets of Asherah” and “450 prophets of Baal,” the Bible reports darkly. Josiah's cleansing of the Temple was good strategy in a zero-sum game: the less influence these prophets had, the more he had.

Josiah was probably a monolatrist, not a monotheist. But within a few decades of his death, true monotheism would finally emerge. In 586 B.C.E., Israelite elites were exiled to Babylon after conquest by the neo-Babylonian Empire. In passages from Isaiah that are thought to have been written during the exile, Yahweh says unequivocally, “Besides me there is no god.” Does this extreme intolerance of other gods—the denial of their very existence—flow from a zero-sum view of Israel's environs?

It would seem so. The author of these monotheistic passages (known by scholars as second Isaiah, to distinguish him from the author of earlier chapters in Isaiah) sees an Israel long tormented by “oppressors” who are due for a comeuppance. The punishment that Isaiah envisions for these enemies seems to include subjugation and, as a bonus, the news that their gods don't exist. Isaiah's God promises the Israelites that, come the apocalypse, people from Egypt and elsewhere will “come over in chains and bow down to you. They will make supplication to you, saying, ‘God is with you alone, and there is no other; there is no God besides him.’” So there.

Happily, after the exile, life got more non-zero-sum. The Babylonians who had conquered Israel were in turn conquered by the Persians, who returned the exiles to their homeland. Israel was no longer in a bad neighborhood. Nearby nations were now fellow members of the Persian Empire and so no longer threats. And, predictably, books of the Bible typically dated as postexilic, such as Ruth and Jonah, strike a warm tone toward peoples—Moabites and Assyrians—that in pre-exilic times had been vilified.

A more inclusive view is also found in a biblical author (or authors) thought by many scholars to be writing shortly after the exile—the priestly source. The priestly source, or P, uses internationally communal language and writes not just of God's cov-

**Again and again in the Bible, a perception of non-zero-sumness underlies religious tolerance**

enant with Israel but of an "everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth."

A zero-sum, isolationist worldview had moved Israel from polytheism to belligerent monotheism, but now, as Israel's environment grew less threatening, belligerence was turning out not to be an intrinsic part of monotheism. Between second Isaiah's angry exilic exclamations and P's more congenial voice, Israel had segued from an exclusive to an inclusive monotheism.

A millennium later, this same dynamic—swings between zero-sum and non-zero-sum—would have a similar impact on Islamic monotheism, moving it back and forth between belligerence and tolerance.

Muhammad's preaching career started in Mecca around 613 C.E., and he seems to have had hopes of drawing Jews and Christians into a common faith. In the Koran—which Muslims consider the word of God as spoken by Muhammad—the Prophet's followers are told to say to fellow Abrahamics, "Our God and your God is one."

This hope of playing a win-win game shows up in overtures to Jews in particular, made mainly after Muhammad moved to the city of Medina and became its political and religious leader. Muhammad decided his followers should have an annual 24-hour fast, as Jews did on Yom Kippur. He even called it Yom Kippur—at least he used the term some Arabian Jews were using for Yom Kippur. The Jewish ban on eating pork was mirrored in a Muslim ban. Muhammad also told his followers to pray facing Jerusalem. He said God, in his "prescience," chose "the children of Israel ... above all peoples."

As for Christians: having denounced polytheists who believed Allah had daughters, Muhammad couldn't now embrace the idea that Jesus was God's son. But he came close. He said Jesus was "the Messiah ... the Messenger of God, and His Word ... a Spirit from Him." God, according to the Koran, gave Jesus the Gospel and "put into the hearts of those who followed him kindness and compassion."

Muhammad's ecumenical mission seems to have failed. Certainly, he sensed rejection from Christians and Jews. A Koranic verse captures his disillusionment. "O Believers! Take not the Jews or Christians as friends. They are but one another's friends." Once you're convinced that non-zero-sum collaboration isn't in the cards, the bonhomie dries up.

In his new, zero-sum mode, Muhammad changed the direction of prayer from Jerusalem to Mecca. According to Islamic tradition, he expelled three tribes of Jews from Medina—and killed the adult males in the third tribe, which was suspected of collaborating with Meccans in a battle against Medina.

Still, in the end, Christians and Jews get a favored place in Islamic tradition as "people of the Book." The Koran repeatedly says they're eligible for salvation.

Within years of Muhammad's death in 632, Islamic leaders started conquering lands far and wide. This imperial expansion gave birth to the doctrine of jihad, which mandates battle against unbelievers with the aim of conversion.

## God spent enough time in benevolent mode to leave the Scriptures littered with odes to understanding

But once the conquering was done, Muslim leaders found that trying to compel uniform belief in a multinational empire was a lose-lose game. Doctrines granting freedom of worship to Christians and Jews emerged promptly. And later, such freedom would also be granted to Buddhists and polytheists.

Meanwhile, the doctrine of jihad would be dulled through amendment. And the notion of a "greater jihad"—struggle within oneself toward goodness—would arise and be attributed to Muhammad himself. As in Israel after the exile, the Abrahamitic God, having found himself in a multi-ethnic milieu rife with non-zero-sumness, underwent moral growth.

In neither case had the growth been smoothly progressive, and in both cases, there would be backsliding. Still, in both cases, God spent enough time in benevolent mode to leave the Scriptures littered with odes to tolerance and understanding, verses that modern believers can focus on, should they choose.

Will they so choose? Maybe the code embedded in the Scriptures can help. The key, it suggests, is to arrange things so that relations between Muslims and Jews are conspicuously non-zero-sum.

Sometimes this may mean engineering the non-zero-sumness—for example, strengthening commerce between Israel and the Palestinian territories. Other times it will mean highlighting a non-zero-sum dynamic that already exists—emphasizing, for example, that continued strife between Israelis and Palestinians will be lose-lose (as would escalated tensions between the "Muslim world" and the "West" more broadly). Enduring peace would be win-win.

This peace would also have been foretold. Isaiah (first Isaiah, not the Isaiah of the exile) envisioned a day when God "shall arbitrate for many peoples" and "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." And in a Koranic verse dated by scholars to the final years of Muhammad's life, God tells humankind that he has "made you into nations and tribes, so that you might come to know one another."

This happy ending is hardly assured. It can take time for people, having seen that they are playing a non-zero-sum game, to adjust their attitudes accordingly. And this adaptation may never happen if barriers of mistrust persist.

But at least we can quit talking as if this adaptation were impossible—as if intolerance and violence were inevitable offshoots of monotheism. At least we can quit asking whether Islam—or Judaism or any other religion—is a religion of peace. The answer is no. And yes. It says so in the Bible, and in the Koran. ■





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## Are Stocks Still Good for the Long Run?

After a horrible decade for investors, some long-accepted wisdom is under fire

BY JUSTIN FOX

STOCKS, WE HAVE BEEN TOLD AGAIN AND again through the years, are the best long-term investment. Prices go up and they go down, but give stocks enough time and they deliver returns that trounce those of bonds, real estate, commodities or any other asset class.

Ha! you say. *Have you checked your 401(k) balance lately?* Since the beginning of this decade, the stock market has been a money pit. At the market's nadir in early March, stock investors had lost more than 50% since March 2000, if you factored in inflation. Things have improved since then—to a mere 40% loss.

### Stock Returns over the Past ...

10 years	20 years	30 years
-5.4%	4.5%	6.2%

Annualized S&P 500 total return through March, adjusted for inflation

So can stocks possibly still be the best long-run investment? Somewhat surprisingly, the answer turns out to hinge on what you mean by *best* and what you mean by *long-run*. The *investment* part actually remains pretty cut and dried. Over the past two centuries, stocks have done dramatically better for investors

than have bonds or any other asset class. And while, to parrot the mutual-fund prospectuses, past performance is no guarantee of future results, there are sensible economic arguments why stocks should continue to perform best in the future.

But that does not mean that buying and holding a portfolio composed mostly of stocks—the standard investing advice of the past quarter-century—makes sense for all of us. In the past few years, the mantra of “stocks for the long run” has come under fire from some respected students of financial markets. Their two main critiques have to do with those

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**KEY STAT**  
**60¢**

What \$1 invested in stocks in March 2000 is worth today, inflation-adjusted


**KEY STAT**  
**6%**

Siegel's estimate of the current yield on stocks, as opposed to the 1.70% risk-free yield on inflation-linked bonds known as TIPS


**KEY STAT**  
**100%**

The proportion of your retirement savings that should be invested in TIPS. You won't lose it

ROBERT ARNOTT

### 'Pay Attention to Price'

The Southern California money manager and master number cruncher says stocks beat bonds over the long haul—but the long haul is an awful lot longer if you buy stocks when they're expensive. And boy, were they expensive in March 2000. The key, he advises, is to put your money into asset classes that are relatively cheap. Currently he favors corporate bonds of various sorts.

JEREMY SIEGEL

### 'Value Stocks Are Better'

The "Wizard of Wharton" and author of the investing classic *Stocks for the Long Run* still generally sticks to his buy-stocks-and-hold-on-to-them guns. But he has come around to the argument that price is a major determinant of long-run returns. Buy stocks when they're cheap and you're better off. Right now, Siegel thinks stocks are reasonably cheap.

ZVI BODIE

### 'I'm Just More Risk-Averse'

Bodie, a Boston University finance professor and author of *Worry-Free Investing*, is a worrywart. He doesn't want you to invest your retirement fund in stocks, period. Why? Because stocks are just too darned risky. "If you want to save more than that and speculate in the stock market, by all means, do it," he says. "But you need to recognize that you can't count on it when you do that."

terms *long run* and *best*. The first debate centers on whether you can count on stocks' long-term advantage to work out over your particular investment horizon; the second is about whether an investment as risky as stocks belongs in a retirement portfolio in the first place.

#### The Case for Stocks

FIRST, THOUGH, A LITTLE BACKGROUND on stocks for the long run. The notion goes back to 1922, when a bond brokerage in New York City hired Edgar Lawrence

Smith to put together a pamphlet explaining why bonds—and certainly not stocks—were the best long-term investment. At the time, this was conventional wisdom on Wall Street. Bonds were for investment, stocks for speculation—and, in those pre-SEC days, for manipulation. But when he investigated the historical record, Smith recounted later, "supporting evidence for this thesis could not be found." Instead, he discovered that over every 20-year span he examined but one, stocks handily beat bonds.

In 1924, Smith published the results as a book called *Common Stocks as Long Term Investments*. It was a sensation. Smith—a businessman of no great distinction up to that point—launched a mutual-fund company on the strength of his sudden fame and got an invite from John Maynard Keynes to join the Royal Economic Society. His argument was that stocks would continue to beat bonds because they a) were less vulnerable to having their value eaten away by inflation and b) allowed investors to share in the growth



of the U.S. economy in a way that bonds and other assets did not. These two tenets were the indispensable theoretical underpinning of the 1920s bull market.

After that boom came to a crashing end in 1929 and the market continued to implode in 1930, '31 and '32, this theoretical underpinning at first seemed to have been demolished. The idea that stocks could be good investments became a joke and remained that—in the popular view, at least—for decades. Yet whenever anyone in later years re-examined the data on stocks' long-run performance—major scholarly studies on the topic were published in 1938, '53, '64 and '76—they reached the same conclusion Smith did. Even with the dire experience of the early 1930s factored in, stocks had proved an excellent long-run investment, with returns that far outpaced those of bonds.

Finance scholars also bolted a third plank onto Smith's two reasons this was so and would continue to be: stocks were riskier than bonds, and stock investors were thus being paid a premium for taking on that additional risk.

In 1994 came the most influential of the stocks-vs.-bonds studies yet, Jeremy Siegel's *Stocks for the Long Run*. The book, which laid out the records of stocks and bonds going back to 1802 and found stocks winning by a mile for almost every 30-year period over those two centuries, became a must-read for investors. Siegel—a professor of finance at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School—became what one journalist described as “the intellectual godfather of the 1990s bull market.”

In 2000, that particular bull died in the tech wreck. But unlike Edgar Lawrence Smith, who faded into obscurity after the '29 crash, Siegel has retained his reputation. That's partly because his book (the fourth edition of which was published last year) is full of warnings that when he says long run he really means *long run*—say, 20 to 30 years. It's also partly because in March 2000, just as the stock market was peaking, Siegel warned in a *Wall Street Journal* Op-Ed column that technology stocks were headed for a precipitous fall. But it's mainly that, despite the market carnage of the past year and decade, Siegel's basic argument that “stocks will remain the best investment for all those seeking long-term gains” hasn't really been discredited.

Sure, there are some market seers convinced that Siegel and his work will eventually be consigned to the dustbin of history—because they think the U.S. economy has entered into an inexorable decline. But among Siegel's fellow finance

wonks, the debate isn't about his basic premise. It's about the lessons the rest of us should or shouldn't draw from it.

### The Case for Bonds

IN APRIL, ROBERT ARNOTT—A VETERAN money manager from Southern California and former editor of the finance wonks' bible, the *Financial Analysts Journal*—penned a much discussed article for something called the *Journal of Indexes*. Arnett pointed out that while stocks still beat bonds over the long, long run, they actually lost out to 20-year government bonds from March 1969 through March 2009. That 40-year period is, by most standards, a pretty long run.

This wasn't because stocks were a horrible investment during that time—\$1 put into stocks in March 1969, with dividends reinvested over the years, was

**‘My feeling is that stocks over the next 10 to 20 years are going to give above-average returns.’**

—JEREMY SIEGEL, AUTHOR OF *STOCKS FOR THE LONG RUN*

worth \$280 after 40 years. But bonds did even better (\$1 to \$294). Siegel, who has debated Arnett on CNBC and elsewhere, sees this as evidence that bonds are now too expensive rather than an argument against stocks—and Arnett doesn't entirely disagree. “I'd hate to have people read that and construe that bonds will win over the next 40 years,” he says.

But Arnett argues that the evidence does indicate that “the common interpretation that stocks should be the core of your portfolio always” is wrong. “The main message I would want to convey to John and Mary Doe investor is, Pay attention to the price you pay for an asset,” he says.

The message that price matters has been getting more prominence in Siegel's work too. He says the one significant change in his advice over the past decade has been an increased emphasis on “value” stocks with prices that are low relative to earnings, book value and other fundamental measures. Both Arnett and

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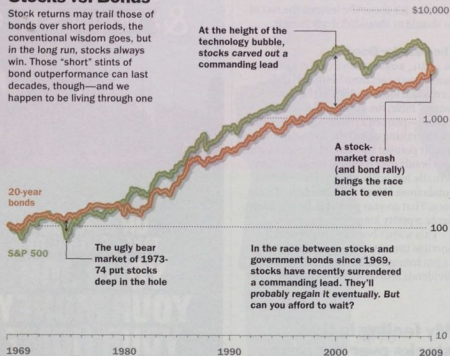
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## Stocks vs. Bonds

Stock returns may trail those of bonds over short periods, the conventional wisdom goes, but in the long run, stocks always win. Those "short" stints of bond outperformance can last decades, though—and we happen to be living through one



This decade, stocks lost half their value, adjusted for inflation, while bonds more than doubled theirs



Over two centuries, stock returns trounced bonds' 151 to 1. But bonds have had their moments



Source: Research Affiliates

Siegel are boosters of a new investment approach called fundamental indexing, in which one assembles a portfolio weighted by earnings, dividends or the like in order to avoid the tendency inherent in conventional capitalization-weighted index funds to load up on the most expensive stocks.

The main difference between the two experts really comes down to how confident each is that it's possible to pick winners. Arnott makes a living trying to do just that—his firm Research Affiliates manages the PIMCO All Asset Fund, which switches money between asset classes as conditions and prices change. For the past few months, his favorites have been high-yield (junk) and investment-grade corporate bonds and convertible bonds. Siegel favors simplicity—and stocks. "My feeling is that stocks over the next 10 to 20 years are going to give above-average returns," he says.

### The Case for TIPS

TO BOSTON UNIVERSITY FINANCE professor Zvi Bodie, another frequent

debating partner of Siegel's, this entire discussion is beside the point for most Americans. "He could be right," he says of Siegel's argument that stocks are a good deal right now. "I'm just more risk-averse than he is." Bodie, co-author of the perennially best-selling business-school textbook *Investments*, wrote a 2003 book titled *Worry-Free Investing* and has been trying ever since to steer personal-finance advice in a radically new direction. For most Americans, Bodie says, stocks are entirely inappropriate vehicles for saving for retirement. The reason they outperform bonds over time is the very reason they should be avoided: they're riskier. And if you're putting away money that you're going to need to live off in retirement, you shouldn't be taking any risk at all.

Standard fixed-rate bonds can be devalued by inflation (a bond that pays 5% interest a year is a loser if inflation is 6%), but in 1997 the U.S. government introduced what Bodie considers the perfect risk-free investment, Treasury inflation-protected securities, or TIPS. The interest

rate on TIPS rises and falls with the inflation rate. And as far as Bodie is concerned, all retirement-investing advice should come down to this: "If your goal is to maintain your standard of living, then here's how much you should be saving and putting into TIPS," he says. "If you want to save more than that and speculate in the stock market, by all means, do it. But you need to recognize that you can't count on it when you do that."

When I recount this to Siegel, he says, "I like TIPS, but you know what the yields are? Now it's 1.79% for 10 years, totally taxable yield. Compared to 6% [earnings yield] in stocks, that's a huge difference." To follow Bodie's advice, then, you're probably going to need to save a lot more money for retirement than you've been doing. Stocks offer the promise of saving less and ending up with the same retirement income. As millions have discovered over the past nine years, though, it's not a promise you can count on. Where does that leave us? Stocks are still the best investment for the long run. But maybe not for your long run.

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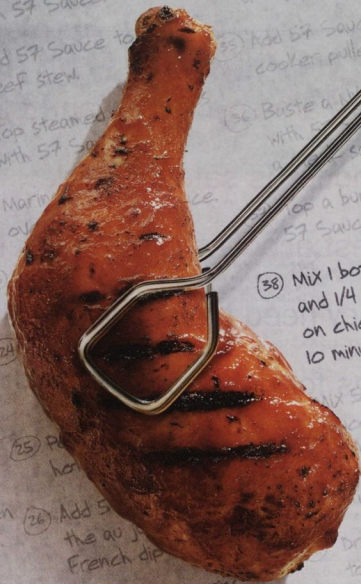
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38 Mix 1 bottle 57 Sauce and 1/4 cup honey; brush on chicken during last 10 minutes of grilling.



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Among China's new regulations:  
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FAMILY, PAGE 55

# Life

FOOD FAMILY FIT NATION



**FOOD**  
**Cow-Pooling.** Friends and families are banding together to buy cheap, grass-fed meat directly from farmers. Side of beef, anyone?

BY KATE PICKERT

IF YOU PREFER TO KEEP the image of meat—say, a juicy hamburger—safely separated from the image of an actual animal—say, a 1,200-lb. castrated bull—then cow-pooling is not for you. Jean Edwards is clearly not squeamish about knowing

precisely where her steaks come from. In 2007, she and her husband James, a corrections officer in Vermont, went in with another family to buy a side of grass-fed beef directly from a farmer. The Edwardses wanted naturally raised meat but couldn't afford natural-food-store prices. Not only did cow-pooling prove to be

cost-effective but also the meat from Mike Bowen's 900-acre North Hollow Farms, in central Vermont, was so tasty—compared with beef raised on corn in an industrial feedlot—that in the years since, Edwards has purchased an entire side just for her family. On a recent evening, the 43-year-old mother of

five loaded her minivan with 250 lb. of beef, butchered and vacuum-packed to her specifications. "Not only am I buying a freezerful of meat, which gives me a kind of secure feeling," she says, "I'm dealing directly with the farmer, which is almost inspirational."

At a time when many family incomes are falling, the

pressure is on to give up expensive foods like organic produce and grass-fed beef. But thanks to the Internet, cow-pooling is an increasingly popular way to get high-quality non-factory-farm meat without paying about \$16 per lb. for a strip steak—the usual price at the Whole Foods Markets of the world. After “processing,” a euphemism for slaughtering and butchering, high-quality beef bought via cow-pooling costs \$3 to \$5 per lb., which is cheaper than it would be even at a farmer’s market. Of course, that price includes ground beef and stew meat as well as tenderloin and filet mignon, not to mention beef tongue and a cantaloupe-size heart.

While direct-farm buying still represents only a tiny fraction of total beef sales, the market for such meat is expanding, according to Erin Barnett, who runs LocalHarvest.org, a national directory of local food producers. After a long wait, Barnett, who lives in Northfield, Minn., got word in May that the side of grass-fed Bueling steer that she and four

other families were buying at a nearby farm was big enough for slaughter. (Buelingos are sometimes referred to as Oreo cows because of their distinct black and white bands.)

Ever since being assigned this steer, Barnett and her fellow cow-poolers have been involved in a “delicate negotiation process,” she says, gently lobbying for certain cuts. By definition, butchering for some cuts excludes others. “But we’re a pretty flexible bunch, and a lot of us like hamburger.”

Keith Matis, a retiree in Silver Spring, Md., developed an NFL-draft-like system for picking cuts of the quarter steer he and two families bought in Virginia’s Highland County. Shareholders took turns placing dibs on the most desirable cuts. For Matis, these included the heart, which he considers a “good substitute for bacon.”



#### Got Freezer?

For a closer look at this foodie trend, go to [time.com/cowpooling](http://time.com/cowpooling)



**Stocked** Jean Edwards with the side of beef she bought in Vermont

A side of beef weighs about 250 lb. after butchering and can fit in a 10-cu.-ft. freezer. According to the Appliance Manufacturers Association, freezer sales in April were 14% higher than in April 2008, a rare sign of growth in an otherwise sagging consumer sector. For customers who have less storage space or can’t eat that much beef in a year—its freezer shelf life—many farms will take orders for quarters of beef and alert customers when an entire animal is sold and ready for slaughter. Essentially, this is cow-pooling among strangers,

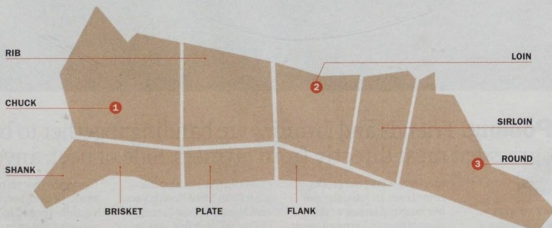
although ordering this way is slightly more expensive. (For a list of farms that sell sides of beef online or locally, check out EatWild.com.)

Tamar Adler, a writer and community organizer in San Francisco, runs a social-networking site devoted to cow-pooling called Bay Area Meat CSA ([bamcsa.ning.com](http://bamcsa.ning.com)), short for “community-supported agriculture,” which is when consumers pay money up front to a farmer to deliver seasonal food throughout the year. The Bay Area site, which launched late last year, helps people pool their resources to buy large quantities of locally raised meat. “It hits all the right spots because ranchers have a hard time getting small amounts of meat to suburban and urban markets,” says Adler, who plans to start similar sites for New York and Georgia soon.

Back in Vermont, once Edwards and her family eat enough beef to carve out some space in the freezer, they plan to return to Mike Bowen’s farm—for a pig.

## The Bottom Line on Beef. High-quality, grass-fed meat costs a bundle—unless you buy directly from the farmer

### BEEF CUTS



### COW-POOLING

For a side of grass-fed beef, cow-poolers generally pay a flat price of **\$3-\$5** per lb., which is on par with what supermarkets charge for standard, corn-fed hamburger meat and well below their grass-fed prices

### THE SUPERMARKET

	Corn-fed	Grass-fed
1 Ground chuck*	\$3.99	\$4.99
2 Tenderloin	\$15.99	\$24.99
3 Top-round steak	\$4.49	\$6.99

\*Ground chuck can be made from multiple cuts of beef. Sources: National Cattlemen’s Beef Association; Albertsons in Boise, Idaho, and Whole Foods Market in Boulder, Colo.



## FAMILY

# Behind the Drop in Chinese Adoptions.

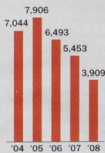
How new rules in Beijing are weeding out more U.S. parents



**Fewer adoption approvals** And the backlog is bigger too. Families wait for paperwork in Guangzhou

## THE TALLY

U.S. adoptions of Chinese children are down 51% from 2005



Source: U.S. Department of State

BY KAYLA WEBLEY/HONG KONG

BECKY FREER SAYS ADOPTING a 10-month-old girl from China was the best thing she ever did. So when the 44-year-old surgeon from Austin, Texas, recently decided to adopt another daughter, she thought China was the obvious choice. She soon discovered, however, that as a single mom, she is no longer eligible. "Three years ago, I was an acceptable parent, and now I'm not," she says. "It seems unfair." While Freer has since been approved to adopt a child from Ethiopia, she is one of a growing number of prospective parents who are finding out they are unable to adopt from China under new laws Beijing enacted in May 2007.

International adoptions in the U.S. gained momentum during the 1990s as families reached out to orphans in poorer corners of the world. China's international

adoption program, which was launched in 1992, has become particularly popular because of its transparency and efficiency. But the stricter guidelines, intended to reduce an overwhelming number of applicants, are proving effective. Adoptions of Chinese children by U.S. citizens have dropped 51% in three years, from a peak of 7,906 children in 2005 to 3,909 in 2008, according to the U.S. State Department. Among the new regulations: adoptive parents must meet certain educational and financial requirements, be married, be under 50, not be obese, not have taken antidepressants in the past two years and, if missing an eyeball, must wear a glass eye.

Even before these restrictions took effect, adopting a child from China was never simple. The state-run China Center of Adoption Affairs requires U.S. applicants to submit a long list of documents,

including home studies completed by social workers and federal background checks. Fees and expenses can run more than \$20,000, and China is only now placing children in the homes of families in other countries who were cleared to adopt more than three years ago. Some applicants who don't want to wait that long look to China's "waiting child" database of orphans with special needs.

The new laws are only part of the reason fewer Chinese children are being adopted by American families. While the Chinese government does not release domestic adoption figures, U.S.-based adoption agencies say more Chinese children are being adopted in the mainland. (Adopting a second child is one of the few exceptions to China's one-child policy.) "More and more people can not only afford to adopt a child, but culturally it's also more accepted," says Cory Barron, director of Children's Hope International, an adoption agency based in St. Louis, Mo.

A change in the perception of gender may also be a factor. While girls still make up 95% of children at orphanages, the attitude among Chinese parents "toward having girls is changing dramatically," says Josh Zhong, director of Chinese Children Adoption International in Centennial, Colo. "I have friends [in China] who have girls, and they are just so excited." It's part of a shift that, for the foreseeable future, will keep more of China's children closer to home. ■



## Too Fat? Read Your E-Mail

A new study shows that simple e-mail reminders can prod recipients to eat better and exercise more



new research has confirmed.

According to a study published in the June issue of the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, simple e-mail reminders to eat more healthfully or increase physical activity had a significant effect on the recipients' behavior. Out of 787 office workers who participated in the study, 351 were randomly selected to receive weekly e-mails and midweek reminders generated by a cost-effective, easily scalable program called ALIVE! (A Lifestyle Intervention via Email). E-mail recipients got to choose one of three focus areas: boosting physical activity, increasing fruit and vegetable intake or decreasing sugars and saturated fats. The e-mails, devised by a company founded by a public-health professor at the University of California, Berkeley, were brief and contained one small goal a week, such as going for a walk during a coffee break, ordering a salad with grilled chicken for lunch or avoiding the cupcakes in the conference room.

These little suggestions worked. By the end of the 16-week study, which was conducted by Kaiser Permanente and NutritionQuest and funded in part by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, participants who received the physical-activity e-mails increased their exercise regimen by an hour a week more than

the control group had. And participants who focused on a healthy diet reduced the saturated and trans fats they consumed by more than 1 g a day. Turns out the people who wanted to increase their fruit-and-vegetable intake were among the healthiest to start with, but even they bumped up their consumption of those foods by about a third of a cup per day.

"These quick alerts remind your brain of the goals you've set for yourself," says Barbara Sternfeld, senior research scientist at Kaiser Permanente and the study's lead investigator. "So instead of standing around talking to a co-worker for 10 minutes, you may decide to take a lap around the parking lot and back."

Might not seem like much, but the truth is, small changes can make a big difference in your health. Studies show that switching from butter to soft margarine reduces your bad cholesterol—and by extension your risk of getting heart disease—10%. So come up with a simple step, like "Eat seven colors of fruits and vegetables tomorrow," and program it into your electronic calendar as a recurring reminder. This new goal just became part of your job description. Your bonus at the end of the year? A longer, healthier life.

—WITH REPORTING BY DANIELLE DELLORTO



Sanjay Gupta's **Fit Nation** series airs on *House Call* on CNN, Saturdays at 7:30 a.m. E.T.

JUST BEFORE YOU PICKED UP this magazine, you probably made a decision that affected your health. Maybe you bought the pizza instead of the salad. Or are sipping soda instead of water. Perhaps you decided once again to delay the beginning of your long-planned exercise routine. Every day there are hundreds of seemingly trivial decisions that individually may not mean a whole lot but in combination can add or subtract a substantial amount of time to or from our lives. As a doctor, I am convinced that most people know the healthier choice; they just need frequent reminders to make it. And that is exactly what some



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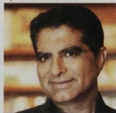
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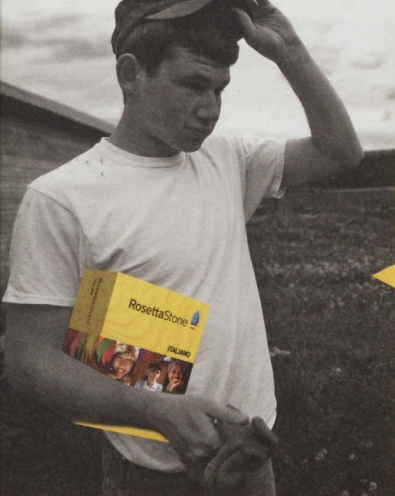
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# Global Business

MARKETING THINKING BIG



## MARKETING

### Buying Muslim. Firms are discovering that halal isn't a religious constraint—it's a consumer lifestyle

BY CARLA POWER

AS A DEVOUT MUSLIM, KHALFAN Mohammed long ago learned to ask staff at the five-star hotels he visits to remove the minibar's alcohol. He loathes lobbies with loud discos and drunken guests. When he's traveling with his parents, it is the bikini that rankle most. "It was quite shocking for my mother to sit in a

restaurant with undressed people," the Abu Dhabi-based businessman says. "My mom and dad are not used to seeing people in public wearing their underwear." To avoid such embarrassment, the Mohammeds took to renting furnished apartments.

No longer. On a trip to Dubai last year, Mohammed stayed in the Villa Rotana, one of a growing number of hotels catering to Muslim

travelers. In the lobby—all white leather, brick and glass, with a small waterfall—quiet reigns. Men in dishdashas and veiled women glide by Westerners, who are sometimes discreetly reminded to respect local customs. Minibars are stocked not with alcohol but with water, Red Bull and Pepsi.

Buying Muslim used to mean avoiding pork and alcohol and get-

**Hot products**  
Kuala Lumpur's annual halal food and trade fair is the world's largest showcase for what is now a trillion-dollar industry

# A Halal Shopping Cart. From fast food to fashion, the sector is thriving



## BY THE NUMBERS

**16%**

Halal's share of the global food industry

**\$632**

BILLION  
Annual halal food market

**1.6**

BILLION  
Worldwide Muslim population

ting your meat from a halal butcher, who slaughtered in accordance with Islamic principles. But the halal-food market has exploded in the past decade and is now worth an estimated \$632 billion annually, according to the *Halal Journal*, a magazine based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. That's about 16% of the entire global food industry. If you throw in the myriad other products and services—cosmetics, real estate, hotels, fashion, insurance—that comply with Islamic law and the teachings of the Koran, the sector is worth much more than \$1 trillion a year.

As companies are discovering, consumerism is not inconsistent with a Muslim lifestyle. The world's 1.6 billion Muslims are younger and, in some places, richer than ever. Seeking to tap that huge market, non-Muslim multinationals like Tesco, McDonald's and Nestlé have expanded their Muslim-friendly offerings and now control an estimated 90% of the global halal market.

At the same time, governments in Asia and the Middle East are pouring millions of dollars into efforts to become regional halal hubs, providing tailor-made manufacturing centers and "halal logistics"—systems to maintain product purity during shipping and storage. The increased competition is changing manufacturing and supply chains in some unusual places. Most of Saudi Arabia's chicken is raised in Bra-

zil, which means Brazilian suppliers have built elaborate halal slaughtering facilities. Abattoirs in New Zealand, the world's biggest exporter of halal lamb, have hosted delegations from Iran and Malaysia. And the Netherlands, keen to maximize Rotterdam's role as Europe's biggest port, has built halal warehouses.

Such arrangements are costly, of course, but since the industry's anchor is food, business is booming, even in the economic crisis. "What downturn?" asks Nordin Abdullah, executive director of the *Halal Journal*. "You don't need your Gucci handbag, but you do need your hamburger."

Not just hamburgers. Drug companies such as the U.K.'s Principle Healthcare and Canada's Duchesnay now sell halal vitamins that are free of the gelatins and other animal derivatives that some Islamic scholars say make mainstream products *haram*, or unlawful. The Malaysia-based company GranuLab produces synthetic bone-graft material to avoid using animal bone, while Malaysian and Cuban scientists are collaborating on a halal meningitis vaccine.

Today, though, the big business is in working out how to serve the increasingly sophisticated Muslim consumer. "The question now for companies is, What products and services are you going to provide to help Muslims lead the lifestyle they want to lead?" says the *Halal*

## SERVICES

Hotels run along Islamic lines, like Dubai's Villa Rotana, left, offer quieter and more family-friendly places to stay. Banks that operate according to Shari'a law are doing well during the global downturn because they tend to be more conservative



## FOOD

Muslim-owned halal companies like Dubai's Al Islami, which sells everything from chicken burgers to spinach, are growing fast

## LIFESTYLE

Muslims are buying more magazines, such as the U.K.-based *Emel*, and halal cosmetics like Saaf's that contain no alcohol or animal fats

*Journal's* Abdullah. It's a code worth cracking. A 2007 report from the global ad agency JWT describes the Muslim market thus: "It's young, it's big, and it's getting bigger." Parts of it are well educated and wealthy. The buying power of American Muslims alone is estimated at a hefty \$170 billion annually. But with few exceptions, American marketers ignore them, says Ann Mack, JWT's director of trend-spotting. "Muslims don't feel that brands are speaking to them," she says.

That's less of a problem elsewhere. Indeed, the most innovative new halal products and services often come out of Europe and Southeast Asia, places where your average food supplier or bank may know little, if anything, about halal. In Europe—the biggest growth region, according to the *Halal Journal*—young, devout Muslims are hungry for Islamic versions of mainstream pleasures. "The second- and third-generation Muslims are fed up with having rice and lentils every day," observes Darhim Hashim, CEO of the Malaysia-based International Halal Integrity Alliance. "They're saying, 'We want pizzas. We want Big Macs.'" Domino's now sources halal pepperoni from a Malaysian company for the pizzas it sells in such places as Kuala Lumpur and Birmingham, England; KFC is testing halal-only stores in Muslim areas of the U.K.; and the Subway



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**Fresh look** Halal cosmetics and other products also appeal to non-Muslims concerned about pure ingredients

sandwich chain has halal franchises across Britain.

Swiss food giant Nestlé is a pioneer in the field. It set up its halal committee in the 1980s and has long had facilities to keep its halal and non-halal products separated. Sales of halal products reached \$3.6 billion last year, and 75 of the company's 456 factories are set up for halal production.

Even non-food companies like South Korea's LG and Finnish cell-phone giant Nokia are catering to Muslim customers. LG offers an application to help users find the direction of Mecca, while Nokia provides free downloadable recitations from the Koran and maps showing the locations of major mosques in the Middle East. Such offerings increase brand loyalty, according to market research by the Finland-based Muslim lifestyle portal Muslim.com.

It's also about understanding the nuances. The hypermarket run by French supermarket giant Carrefour at the Mid Valley Megamall in Kuala Lumpur is overwhelmingly halal, with an elaborate system to keep halal foods separate from *haram* ones. Goods that divide scholars on whether they're halal or *haram* because they could have trace ele-

ments of wine—balsamic vinegar, say, or Kikkoman Marinade—get slapped with little green stickers to alert customers. "I'm so scared," says Norini Razak, a 23-year-old regular Carrefour shopper in a gray-and-white hijab. "It's difficult for one to know what is halal and what is not, so I'd prefer to go to a shop with labels [to help me]."

The rising concerns of consumers like Razak herald not just a global economic trend but a cultural one as well. During the 1980s and '90s, many Muslims in Egypt, Jordan and other Middle Eastern countries expressed their religious principles by voting Islamic. Today a growing number of them are doing so by buying Islamic, connecting to their Muslim roots by what they eat, wear and play on their iPods.

Rising Muslim consumerism undermines the specious argument often heard after 9/11: Muslims hate the Western way of life, with its emphasis on choice and consumerism. The growing Muslim market is a sign of a newly confident Islamic identity—one based not on politics but on personal lifestyles. "Muslims will spend their money more readily on halal food and products than on political causes," says Zahed Amanullah, the European man-

aging director of California-based Zabihah.com, an online guide to the global halal marketplace. Like many Muslim Americans, Amanullah grew up eating Jewish kosher food to stay halal. The irony is delicious, of course. But increasingly, there's an alternative to kosher. Zabihah offers tens of thousands of reviews of halal restaurants. Says Amanullah: "We can't keep up."

The dazzling range of new products and services also reflects the seismic social changes under way in the Muslim world. One of the reasons halal frozen food, lunch-box treats and quick-fix dinners are growing in popularity is that many more Muslim women, from Egypt to Malaysia, have full-time jobs.

Western Muslims, whose minority status sharpens their sense of identity, are also helping refine the notion of a Muslim lifestyle. In Britain, advertisers are increasingly embracing the power of the "green" pound (that's Islamic green, not environmental green), says Sarah Joseph, editor of *Emel*, a glossy lifestyle monthly for British Muslims. When *Emel* launched in 2003, the notion of a Muslim lifestyle barely existed. "People were confused that we could present everything from food, fashion, travel and gardening, all from a Muslim perspective," says Joseph.

But Muslims are the fastest-growing segment of the middle class in Britain: they have big families—an average of 3.4 children, compared with the national average of 1.9—so they buy big cars, and they spend money on home decoration and twice-yearly vacations, "not just going back to Pakistan or Bangladesh, like their [immigrant] parents did," says Joseph. Bucking the current publishing trend, *Emel* is hiring extra staff and plans new magazines to cater to Muslim readers. Advertisers include British Airways and banking giant HSBC.

To keep growing, halal firms know they can't rely on religion alone. "Ideology does not fit within a consumer mind-set," observes Amanullah. "At the end of the day, people will not buy halal simply because it's halal. They're going to buy quality food. Ideology doesn't make a better-tasting burger, a better car or a better computer." But it sure makes a powerful marketing pitch. —WITH REPORTING BY SHADIAH ABDULLAH/DUBAI ■

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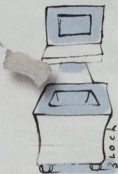
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## THINKING BIG

**No Souvenirs.** Using RFID, one firm makes sure that sponges don't go home with surgical patients



## HIDE AND SEEK

ClearCount's system keeps track of the RFID chip embedded in each surgical sponge. If a sponge goes missing, a wand helps locate it

BY COELI CARR

PATIENTS WHO UNDERGO SURGERY aren't keen on souvenirs. Most draw the line at a scar. But some will go home with an internal take-away—a surgical sponge left inside them. The majority of U.S. hospitals still use traditional sponges that nurses count manually. (They also count instruments.) But an increasing number have switched to more technologically sophisticated sponge systems that automate the counting to enhance patient safety.

This spring, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC) in New York City became the first hospital to switch to the SmartSponge System—a technology that features chip-embedded sponges—created by ClearCount Medical Solutions, a five-year-old company in Pittsburgh, Pa. It relies on radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology. "Ours is the only FDA-cleared system that uses radio-frequency identification to both count and locate surgical sponges," says David Palmer, ClearCount's CEO. He expects revenues to reach \$8 million this year and \$27 million in 2010.

Using ClearCount's system, nurses scan packages of sponges before an operation. The technology verifies and counts each sponge's internal chip, recording the total in an In column on a display monitor. Used sponges are tossed—either singly or in a compressed wad—into a receptacle with a built-in sensing device that again verifies each chip and

tallies the Outs. Ideally, the figures in those two columns match. If not, the number of missing sponges appears in a third column, aptly titled Find. That's a signal to spring for the wand, which digitally homes in on sponges still inside the patient.

For surgical nurses charged with counting sponges, the device has promise. "Nurses are willing to embrace new technology as long as it doesn't complicate their work flow or compromise the timing and sequence of their counting," says Steven Fleck, ClearCount's co-founder and CTO. At MSKCC, the prospect of improved patient safety and work efficiency won over Michelle Burke, director of perioperative services, and her staff. "One surgeon even tested the detection system for himself by hiding sponges in a corner of the operating room, and the technology located them," says Burke, who bought 21 of the \$15,000 devices.

Large hospitals house 20 to 30 operating rooms and go through hundreds of thousands of sponges a year. Burke acknowledges that adopting the system will significantly escalate sponge costs, but for hospitals there's a cost-benefit trade-off. Using ClearCount sponges increases the cost of each surgical procedure by an average of \$30. Yet the cost of surgical miscues may make the use of systems like ClearCount's a relative bargain. In 2008 the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services stopped reimbursing hospitals for some of the patient care tied to preventable complications, like those


caused when objects are left inside patients during surgery. "Many hospitals have begun to more seriously address these 'never events'—as in 'never should happen,'" says ClearCount's Palmer. "There is a high cost—delays in the surgical schedule, as well as litigation and bad publicity—when hospitals do not take proactive measures."

At a hospital where 30,000 operations are performed a year, having three or four of these incidents annually is not uncommon, says Dr. Atul Gawande, a surgeon at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, who has researched medical errors linked to surgical sponges. "Our studies show that automated sponge-counting systems make things markedly safer," he says. He believes these systems will be standard within five or 10 years.

ClearCount is banking on it. During the past year, the company has sent its SmartSponge System for evaluation to three dozen hospitals, several of which have committed to buy it. The company expects a similar response next year when it expands globally.

Sponges are yet another promising area where RFID has popped up in hospitals. ClearCount plans to expand its tracking to surgical instruments. And more applications await—for instance, ensuring that blood products are delivered with complete accuracy by equipping patients with an RFID device. After all, the first rule of medicine is to do no harm. ■





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TELEVISION, PAGE 64

# Arts

MOVIES TELEVISION MUSIC SHORT LIST



## MOVIES

**Delusions of Manhood.** Will Ferrell's lock on macho infantilism retrofits the '70s relic *Land of the Lost*

BY RICHARD CORLISS

WHEN KIDS PLAY GAMES, THEY PRETEND to be adults: soldiers, spacemen, cops and robbers or, for the more precocious, doctors and nurses. The theme is, Be what you want to be. Then when they grow up, go to Hollywood and make movies, they often create characters that are emotional adolescents, infants, kids. The credo of so many action films and comedies is, Be what you used to

be or what you still, secretly, are. This tendency could be the film industry's wise acknowledgment that inside every adult is a backward child ruled by fears and cravings. Or it could just be that movie people know what audiences will pay to see: grownups behaving not like Cary Grant sophisticates exchanging witty repartee but like kindergartners making poop jokes.

Will Ferrell, in the screen persona he's perfected over a healthy six-year box-office

run, takes the boy's-mind-in-a-man's-body transference a smart step further. In such hits as *Old School*, *Anchorman*, *Talladega Nights* and *Blades of Glory*, he plays overage children who try to act like adults, with their steely intonations and take-charge attitude. His usual character is the kind of fellow who learned how real men behave

**Tall hero in short pants ... which he will eventually remove, along with his shirt**



by watching Clint Eastwood and Harrison Ford movies—Hollywood, not life, has beer, his teacher, and he's not such a quick study. Endless setbacks and critiques have not dented Ferrell man's lunatic belief in himself. He strides manfully forward, his eye on the horizon—thus never noticing the open manhole he's about to step into.

Ferrell's latest excursion into delusions of manhood is director Brad Silberling's *Land of the Lost*, an action comedy with the sloppy construction and saving grace notes of the star's other movies. It's based on the Sid and Marty Krofft live-action adventure show—about a man and his son and daughter who are trapped in a time-warped landscape of dinosaurs and talking lizards—that lasted for just 43 episodes on Saturday mornings in the mid-'70s. The series is recalled fondly for its hokey acting and the aliens whose costumes had visible zippers. But its puny pedigree doesn't eliminate it from big-screen retooling. Indeed, if a TV show from the '60s or '70s had a premise elementary enough to be pictured on a lunch-box lid, chances are it's recently been made into a movie. One more victory for the retro kids.

Rick Marshall (Ferrell), who calls himself a quantum paleontologist, has been working on a tachyon meter—it looks like a boom box—that will puncture the space-time continuum. The world laughs at Rick, perhaps because he loves show tunes. But someone believes in him: sexy British scientist Holly Cantrell (Anna Friel), who has found the imprint of his lighter in a rock that's millions of years old. She takes him to the desert area where she found it, and after bumping into the obligatory rude dude, a souvenir salesman named Will (Danny McBride), they all go sliding down a waterfall into the time-jumbled land of the lost.

The script, by Chris Henchy and Dennis McNicholas, honors most of the show's favorite tropes. There's the monkey-man Chaka (Jorma Taccone), a sort of humanoid Cheeta from the old Tarzan movies; the Altrusian lizard lords Enik (John Boylan) and the Zarn (voiced by Leonard Nimoy); and a huge army of the zombie-like Sleestaks—as Will sagely observes, "That's how zombies get you: volume." If fans of the TV show want a *Tyrannosaurus rex* to chase Rick into a cave, as in the old days, they'll get their wish. The difference is in the care taken with the creatures and their environment. The dinos have plausibility and personality, and there are enough rocks, jutting jaws and monster guts thrown at the screen to make a 3-D version of the movie appealing. Production designer Bo Welch's desert vistas—with, say, an ocean liner stuck in the sand at a 60-degree angle—bring Daliesque visions to a routine action comedy.

Father to the other two space-time travel-

ers in the show, Rick here is more the intrepid guide, or he acts that way, even when he's feeling trepid. To blend in with prehistoric beasts, he'll douse himself in the dinosaur urine he's harvested. He'll wander—make that *blunder*—into dangerous situations and, in the movie's sharpest moment, tiptoe through a nest of baby dinosaurs, sedating the little ones by singing "I Hope I Get It" from *A Chorus Line*. Less overbearing than in his earlier films but no less resolute, Ferrell seems to be channeling his George W. Bush impression from *Saturday Night Live* and the one-man Broadway show that earned him a Tony nomination. Rick has that same unwarranted self-assurance, the same blindness to his crippling dooficity.

And because Rick, like every other Ferrell male, is no more self-conscious than he is self-aware, there will be the actor's requisite topless scene. For if Matthew McConaughey is the alpha male, Ferrell is the omega. His chest is large, white and flabby, and it's pocked with what look like dozens of tiny, imperfectly attached hair-implant tufts. It might be a helicopter's eye view of merino sheep stranded on a tundra. And that's what makes this preening so funny: his character's cluelessness to (and Ferrell's awareness of) the limits of his erotic appeal.

We see Rick emerge from a motel pool, and as he shakes his wet hair, the movie goes into loving slo-mo; it both enters his fantasy and laughs at his sub-Adonis reality. Here's the 41-year-old Ferrell playing another child's game, revealing the idiocy and sweetness in the ego of the American male—the kid who never grew up. ■

**Ferrell is the intrepid guide to the other two space-time travelers, or he acts that way, even when he's feeling trepid**



Three men and a baby Galifianakis, Cooper and Helms try to survive the morning after

## MOVIES

# A Night to Forget. In *The Hangover*, gags rule

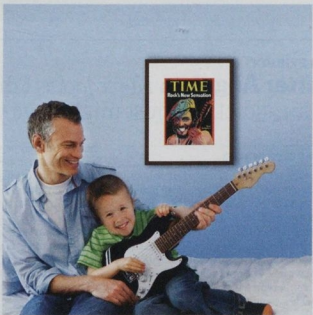
BY RICHARD CORLISS

THE BROMANCE—THAT THRIVING GENRE of the male-bonding comedy—expands geometrically and devolves predictably in *The Hangover*, a buddy farce designed to attract the lonely teen boys who think they're too cool for a Will Ferrell dinosaur movie. Taking the multiple amnesia theme from the 2006 melodrama *Unknown* and referencing about a dozen movies set in Las Vegas, it revels in the hectic display of rude elements (sexual and ethnic stereotyping, pedophile gags, inappropriate people with their pants off) that have made the form as rigid in its conventions as Kabuki theater.

Four guys—the groom (Justin Bartha), his fiancée's oddball brother (Zach Galifianakis), a henpecked friend (Ed Helms) and the token normal guy (Bradley Cooper)—go to Las Vegas for a booze-babes-and-baccarat bachelor party two nights before the wedding. It'll be, one promises, a "night we'll never forget." Next morning, three of them come groggily to in their suite. With them are a tiger in the bathroom and an infant in the closet. Missing, to their horror, are the groom—and any memory of what happened the night before.

Director Todd Phillips made the agreeable Ferrell film *Old School*, and he can frame catastrophe with a comedic elegance, but he's hamstringing by another reductive script from hot writers Jon Lucas and Scott Moore (*Four Christmases*, *Ghosts of Girlfriends Past*). Virtually every joke either is visible long before it arrives or extends way past its expiration date. Even the welcome presence of Heather Graham and a deeply weird cameo by Mike Tyson can't save a bromance so primitive it's practically Bro-Magnon. ■

# Exhibit Your Passions



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## TELEVISION

### **Bitter Angel.** In *Nurse Jackie*, Edie Falco is an addict who just might save your life

BY JAMES PONIEWOZIK

FOR THE FIRST FEW SECONDS OF *Nurse Jackie* (Showtime, Mondays, 10:30 p.m. E.T.), you might believe you are staring into heaven. Everything is white—the glaring light, the ceiling, the walls. Then the camera pans down to a figure on the floor, dressed to match in blinding hospital whites. The only colors in the scene are a pink blotch of gum on the worn sole of her shoe and an amber prescription bottle—holding the Vicodin capsules that, we learn, she cracks open to snort the brilliant orange grains inside, medicating a bad back and her emotional state.

If Jackie Peyton (Edie Falco) is an angel of mercy, we quickly learn that she is, in more ways than one, a fallen one. And she is one of the most interesting people you're likely to meet on TV this year.

*Nurse Jackie* is getting the jump on a TV calendar heavy with new medical

shows. (*Hawthorne*, with Jada Pinkett Smith as a nurse, debuts on TNT on June 16.) But this black comedy is less melodramatic than your typical prime-time IV drip. Nursing, as Jackie practices it at New York City's All Saints Hospital, is hard labor: taxing drudgery that ruins your back and gets you punched out by the occasional unhinged visitor.

It also saves lives—sometimes in spite of the efforts of doctors, who, in *Nurse*

*Jackie*, are at worst arrogant and obtuse, at best brilliant but detached. Her best friend, surgeon Eleanor O'Hara (Eve Best), lays out the differences in their mind-sets: Jackie, she says, became a nurse because she wanted to help people. "When I was a little girl," Eleanor says, "I took a butter knife and opened up a dead bunny to see how it worked. That's why I'm a doctor."

*Nurse Jackie* has a fine-grained sense of hospitals' feudal hierarchy, but it's ultimately about the paradox of Jackie: she's dedicated and moral in her professional life but—in ways it's better not to spoil—hurtful in her private life. As when Falco portrayed Carmela Soprano, she plays tough while letting her emotions spark from every nerve, and she shows a gift for tart comedy here too. To get her job done, Jackie needs to be part nurturer, part con artist, part stand-up comic. "What do you call a nurse with a bad back?" she asks in a voice-over. "Unemployed! Ba dum-bum!"

Some of the supporting characters need work (especially a too-sitcommy administrator played by Anna Deavere Smith), and some patients of the week veer into clichés. But Falco is outstanding as a living reminder that you meet angels only in the next life. It takes a flawed, sloppy human to keep you in this one. ■



**Trying patients** As Jackie, Falco, left, focuses on the taxing physical work of nursing



# MUSIC

## Meow. On its hyped new album, Grizzly Bear doesn't roar so much as purr

BY JOSH TYRANGIEL

HARMONY IS A KIND OF OPTIMISM, expressed in the belief that several voices can do a job better than one. That's partly why Grizzly Bear's *Veckatimest* (named after an uninhabited 16-acre island off Cape Cod, Massachusetts) is a lock to be the sunniest album of the year. All four members sing equally well, and when they weave their high, sweet voices around the others—sometimes in brief and surprising swells, sometimes for the length of entire songs—you can actually hear their faith in one another. It's adorable.

Of course, adorable works for kittens and the Jonas Brothers, but for a Brooklyn-based indie-rock band that's toured with Radiohead and whose album is being heavily hyped as a breakthrough, it's a mixed blessing. On the plus side, Grizzly Bear's songs are never less than pretty, and occasionally they are breathtaking. "Two Weeks" opens with what sounds like a child banging on a piano in search



**Chill** Grizzly Bear's third album sets a relaxing mood—and sticks to it

of a tune until the whole band mews, "Oh-wa-oh-wa-ooooooooo," lifting a melody out of the muck and into the stratosphere, where lead singer Ed Droste asks, "Would you always, maybe sometimes/ Make it easy." It's the sweetest way imaginable to ask someone to chill. "Fine for Now" meanders through all sorts of paces and styles, from a cappella church music to jazz, before settling its focus on a mildly psychedelic cymbal that crashes like the gentlest of waves.

You can hear the Beach Boys in *Veckatimest*'s harmonies and The Band in the general spirit of craftsmanship and fraternity. But over the course of 52 minutes, you also hear what's missing: tension. Even though there are flashes of experimentation (NYU-educated, these boys have admirably eclectic taste in instruments) and plenty of minor chords, Grizzly Bear's politeness is a little oppressive. Without a hint of vocal darkness or a sudden stab of musical chaos, the lyrics gradually dissolve into a series of gumdrops, and the falsetto harmonies lose some of their charm; at its lowest, *Veckatimest* sounds like an album recorded by castrati at a beach house. So maybe it's not a breakout. But its charms are well suited to the fat summer days ahead. ■



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# Short List

TIME'S PICKS FOR THE WEEK



## 1 **DVD** **Woodstock, 3 Days of Peace & Music**

Forty years ago this August, a riot of innocence erupted in Bethel, N.Y., and Michael Wadleigh's historic three-hour rock doc caught it all. Here's the director's cut (40 minutes longer), plus another 2½ hours of performances and an hour of reminiscing by the now 60-something perps. Couldn't be groovier.

## 2 **BOOK** **The Pleasures and Sorrows of Work**

In search of how work gives our lives meaning, Alain de Botton lands in such unlikely places as French Guiana, watching a satellite launch with Japanese TV executives. Even the glass-box accounting office takes on philosophical heft through De Botton's lyrical lens.

## 3 **SONG** **Goodbye**

Kristinia DeBarge—daughter of '80s pop royalty and alum of the *Idol* spin-off *American Juniors*—rips off the chorus from the stadium anthem "Na Na Hey Hey Kiss Him Goodbye" for this summery hit. It's so enjoyably trashy, it's a wonder no one thought of it before.

## 4 **BOOK** **The Art of Making Money**

Art Williams was handed a bad deal: an absent dad and a mentally ill mom. He decided to make his living making bad money. Jason Kersten tracks the rise and fall of the strange but gifted man who cracked counterfeiting's ultimate challenge, the 1996 \$100 bill.

## 5 **TELEVISION** **The Nine**

So these people were taken hostage at a bank. And then got free. And then discovered a conspiracy behind the robbery. And then... and then... ABC canceled the show! Now DirecTV's 101 Network is re-airing the thriller, with four never seen episodes. Recapture it.



**Arts Online**

For more reviews and openings this weekend, go to [time.com/entertainment](http://time.com/entertainment)



## Nia Vardalos' Short List

In 2002 Nia Vardalos burst on the scene as the creator and star of *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*. The little indie that could went on to become the top-grossing romantic comedy of all time, taking in \$241 million. Vardalos' new movie, *My Life in Ruins*, is out now. As a mom (Vardalos adopted a daughter last year), she finds her inner child dancing in her undies and making crank calls—and reading to her daughter, of course.

### Achingly perfect novels

I bought *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro at the airport after I noticed he wrote *The Remains of the Day*. His descriptions of emotions and human behavior are so achingly perfect, it hurts to read, but I couldn't put it down. As soon as I finished, I flipped back to the beginning and read it again. (It was a long flight.)

### A knockout tune

"Boom Boom Pow," by the Black Eyed Peas. I'm not cool. I know musical theater better than hip-hop. But one morning I heard this song and danced in my undies. It makes me happy.

### Outlets for compassion

I love *One Laptop per Child* ([laptop.org](http://laptop.org)) because they give durable, low-power laptop computers to the world's disadvantaged kids. And I really love the social workers at [adoptuskids.org](http://adoptuskids.org). They find homes for American kids. What they do every day gives deeper meaning to the word *compassion*.

### Classic pop-ups

As the new mom of a 4-year-old, I now collect Robert Sabuda's pop-up books—beautiful, imaginative adaptations of classics like *Alice in Wonderland* and *Peter Pan*.

### Crank calls for the video age

I've been having friends over to our house to make stupid videos. We load them onto YouTube and Funny or Die. It's like today's crank call. We shot one called "My Life in Ruins, Really?," in which I said I'd had an affair, and my aunt thought it was real. She called my mom.







Nancy

# Gibbs

## Tickle Me Obama. The first President to grow up with *Sesame Street* is applying the show's lessons in lots of subtle ways

MOST PRESIDENTS ARE EASY TO PIN DOWN ON OUR CULTURAL MAPS. Ronald Reagan was raised in Dixon, Ill., but we placed him in Hollywood, telling America's story on the big screen. Bill Clinton may have been the Man from Hope, Ark., but the mischief of nearby Hot Springs was in his blood. George W. Bush was practically born on the Yale campus, yet Texas was his true *terroir*.

Which brings us to Barack Obama, who belongs... where exactly? Kansas? Kenya? Hawaii? Harvard? None of these quite fit our blender in chief, but it struck me recently that Obama does have a cultural home: he's the first President from *Sesame Street*.

When *Sesame Street* founder Joan Ganz Cooney met Obama at a fundraiser last year, she was prepared to hear what she always does. "I'd have bet you a million dollars," she says, "that [Obama] would tell me how his kids watched *Sesame Street*." But instead the President-to-be told her that he and his little sister watched the show. "I realized that this is the first President young enough to say that."

The Obamas clearly have a deeper personal connection to the show than their White House predecessors did; it was aimed, after all, at kids like them. (Full disclosure: I have a personal connection too; some of my friends work on *Sesame Street*, and they aren't furry.) When Michelle Obama visited the set in Queens, N.Y., to talk about "healthy habits" a few weeks ago, she was practically fizzing. "I'm on a high," she said. "I never thought I'd be on *Sesame Street* with Elmo and Big Bird." Let it be noted that this visit came after she'd met the Queen of England at Buckingham Palace and welcomed Stevie Wonder to the White House and enjoyed all kinds of other not-too-bad perks of being First Lady. "I think it's probably the best thing I've done so far in the White House."

The President is every bit as much a product of the show, but it's not just his age and mastery of the alphabet that make Obama the first *Sesame Street* President. The Obama presidency is a wholly American fusion of optimism, enterprise and earnestness—rather like the far-fetched proposal of 40 years ago to create a TV show that would prove that educational television need not be an oxymoron. Unlike Captain Kangaroo and Mr. Green Jeans in their idyllic Treasure House, or the leafy land of the suburban sitcom, *Sesame*'s characters were colorful,

their milieu was urban; there was noise and grime and grouches, and they hung out on the stoop, not the porch. Parents who were not white, not rich, not able to afford a fancy preschool knew this show was designed for them. Maybe it would level the playing field a little.

It wound up doing much more. *Sesame Street* is now the longest street on the planet. It runs from Harlem to Honolulu; on to Obama's childhood home in Indonesia, where *Jalan Sesama* celebrates unity through diversity; through South Africa, where one Muppet is HIV positive; through Israel and Palestine and Egypt, where girls

are told how important it is that they keep reading and learning. It creates citizens of a highly globalized, post-racial world. "The only kids who can identify along racial lines with the Muppets," genius puppeteer Jim Henson observed, "have to be either green or orange."

And yet for all its empathy, *Sesame Street* has been highly cerebral as well, the perfect hatchery for the Empirical Presidency. It is the most heavily researched children's show ever, conceived by an experimental psychologist, incubated in a Harvard seminar room, vetted by linguists and nutritionists and child-development experts (who once vetoed a segment in which Elmo crawled inside the letter O because they feared that a toddler might see it as permission to climb into a toilet). Obama famously prizes intellect over instinct; he says he wants to see the data and for the data to drive the decision. *Sesame* writers test-drive their skits on focus groups of young children to see how long they can hold the kids' attention and how well the writers deliver their desired message; if the kids drift, the segment dies. The same can be said of any number of Obama's dreamier campaign promises.

*Sesame Street*'s genius lies in finding gentle ways to talk about hard things—death, divorce, danger—in terms that children understand and accept. The polls can tell a President what the American people want to hear, but after so many years of sandbox politics and childish games, there comes a time to grow up. Given the hard choices, does the President think we're ready to handle complexity and delay gratification? If not now, when? Professor Obama has at least talked to us like we're adults. The question remains whether President Obama will govern as though he believes it. ■





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